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SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES IN THE LIFE OF A SISTER

Sister Catherine, D.C., Visitatrix
Marillac Seminary
Normandy, Missouri

Address given in Mobile, Ala., to Sisters engaged in hospital work.

Over the portals of every hospital that was ever built — Catholic, Protestant and Jewish, tax supported or voluntary, large or small, general or special — could well and truthfully be engraved the words of Christ: "I have come that you may have life and may have it more abundantly." To sustain and prolong life, to make every effort to save life is the primary function of a hospital. Through the almost 2500 years that have passed since Hippocrates framed the physicians' oath with its solemn pledge to use every means to maintain life to the patient, life within the walls of every hospital has been held sacred.

Human life, yes. But in Catholic hospitals, we who have been blessed and honored by God with a religious vocation, and who have been assigned by the will of our superiors to exercise our apostolate in caring for the sick and suffering — we have given thought to Christ's words: "I am come that you may have life and may have it more abundantly"; and we know these words apply to temporal life secondarily, but to eternal life primarily.

The cross over every Catholic hospital attests to the world our belief that Christ died that all men might have eternal life. The truth is emphasized and made more personal by the crucifix that hangs in every hall, every department, and every patient's room. Further, in every Catholic hospital there is

a place set apart — a chapel — where Christ dwells as truly as He dwelt with Mary and Joseph in Nazareth, and from His Eucharistic dwelling He looks out and sees re-enacted in the gamut of a hospital's activity every phase of His mortal life, from Bethlehem to Calvary. Every obstetrical division is Bethlehem; every bed where a man lies dying is Calvary. In the occasional child or adult brought to the chapel for Baptism, Christ is again presented in the temple. The relatives of patients who kneel pleading before Him are but another Centurion, another Jairus, another Martha, another Mary. The sick to whom He is carried each morning are again the multitudes pressing upon Him. His anointed minister, the chaplain, daily repeats the great mystery of the Last Supper. Again and again he says to a sick man or woman, "Thy sins are forgiven thee"; he welcomes home the Prodigal Son in the person of one long neglectful of his spiritual welfare, or he brings into the fold someone whose first contact with Christ and His Church was made in the hospital.

Yes, and Christ sees another phase of His mortal life repeated: He sees the faithful women who followed Him everywhere and ministered to His needs — women who followed Him to Calvary where one only of His disciples stood. He sees them with love in their hearts, tending the sick in hospitals, because they see in each patient Christ Himself. These women — you and I, let us say, — belonging to numerous and varied religious communities, have this in common: We make the vows of poverty,

chastity and obedience, and these vows constitute the religious state.

When you did me the honor of asking that I address you on "The Spiritual Principles in the Life of a Sister," I gave the matter much thought and prayer. Then, I had the inspiration (I trust it was such) to speak of the nature of religious vows themselves and their transforming power. Why? For two reasons. The first is that though I have made many annual retreats — perhaps when you look back you will find your experience to have been the same as mine — I never heard a retreat master give a conference on the nature of religious vows. Directors never fail to give a conference on the vows: the obligations of the vows, their extent, what constitutes a venial or a mortal sin against them; our grave responsibility to live up to them. Our Lord's words which justify the vows are quoted, and many examples of the saints who attained to sanctity through fidelity to the vows are cited. But I have never heard a conference that had me leaving the chapel with my heart singing with joy at the privilege that was mine in living on the plane to which vows raise the maker. Never did the conference leave me all but speechless with gratitude, as I humbly repeated the words of Elizabeth: "Whence is this to me Whence is this to me?"

My second reason is this: I would never have the temerity of saying anything to you that sounded even faintly as though I were urging you to do some soul-searching. I am firmly convinced that Sisters never fully realize what great good they do for souls and for the Church simply by *being*. Yes, great as is the good accomplished by the works to which you devote yourselves — teaching, nursing, caring for infants, orphans and the aged — you do greater things yet for God and for souls by *being* what you are: a person totally consecrated and dedicated to God. This is brought about by the vows you make.

There are many spiritual principles in our lives: Holy Mass, Communion, mental and vocal prayer, particular and general exams, spiritual reading and conferences. But these are prescribed in some form by the Rules of the Community to which you belong, and they are all included in your vow of obedience. The manual of Canon Law tells us that "vows are solemn promises made to God and accepted by lawful superiors in the name of the Church, to observe poverty, chastity and obedience in some approved religious organization, in accordance with the Rules and Constitutions." The effects of this are twofold: first, the surrender of one's self to God through the pronouncement of the vows, and this is a spiritual holocaust. A holocaust is a sacrifice completely destroyed, nothing withheld, nothing remaining. By our vows we live, miraculously, we might say, like the burning bush which Moses saw, all aflame, yet never destroyed. And this continues from the moment we pronounce our vows to the moment we hear Christ say: "Come, ye blessed of My Father." The second effect of the vows is the surrender of one's services and liberty to the Order, and the acceptance of that surrender by a superior.

A Second Result

It is this second and far less important result that is almost exclusively stressed by retreat masters, by vow conferences, and books dealing with the vows of religious. You and I have heard about what our respective Communities have a right to expect of us, even to demand of us, in the way of poverty, chastity and obedience, until we spent the night in chewing our finger nails and the days in going back to confession. Dear Sisters, no one knows better than I the pressure under which the hospital Sisters live: the demands made upon you; the multiple tasks heaped upon you; your almost heart-breaking daily efforts to put 120 minutes work into every 60 minute hour. I know how each mail brings to you some new ruling by the agencies that accredit you, or by the Fire and Health departments, by the colleges and universities to which your schools are affiliated, by your medical staff; and — whisper it not in Gath — sometimes by your religious superiors. The Sisters have told me: "The sight of a Marillac Seminary envelope means I'm to have either a thrill or a chill." The irreplaceable Sister is taken . . . approval is not given for that so greatly needed new wing . . . you are directed to make your retreat at an inopportune time . . . you are asked, a bit acidly, perhaps, why your financial report shows more red than black. Yes, superiors can be very trying. And all the more because we love them so. It is in times like these — which means all the time — that we should summon strength from the inner, always-abiding joy that, by reason of our vows, we are constant, perpetual, living holocausts to God. Let us not consider who supplies the fire.

Our vows of religion raise us to a state of perfection and not only oblige us to strive for perfection, but they give a firmness, strength and constancy to our will that the will could in no other way possess. They infuse every act of ours with the virtue of religion, the highest of the moral virtues and the one which comes immediately after the theological virtues. Thus, every action of a religious stemming from her vows has a double merit: that of the act itself, and that which the virtue of religion gives to it. Two religious are working side by side: one has made her vows, the other is still a novice. They are doing exactly the same thing, and each is giving to it all the exterior perfection

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and all the interior purity of intention of which she is capable. The merit of the professed religious exceeds immeasurably that of her companion, by reason of her action being done from the virtue of religion. The vows do not merely produce temporary satisfaction, nor simply enable us to perform a continuous number of good acts, nor stop at implanting a virtue in the soul: no, they give to the virtues upon which the religious state rests, virtues which, to a certain extent, lay persons must practice, a solid foundation in such a way that they are no longer simple virtues, but states of life: The state of poverty, the state of chastity, the state of obedience.

Can novices excel professed Sisters in the individual acts of poverty, chastity and obedience? Before I answer that allow me to digress and say that one of my pet peeves is to hear read from the pulpit in praise of this or that saint: "She was as humble, or as obedient, or as pious, as a novice." If no more can be said of a Sister after 5, 25, or 50 years in a Community, than that she is as virtuous as a novice, I recommend that she be sent back to the novitiate and be taught how to advance in virtue.

Yes, novices, and also lay persons can, in certain individual instances, excel a professed Sister in the practice of virtue. That does not raise either the novice or the lay person to the Sister's plane of spirituality. Here is a fairly apt illustration. A man, in civilian life, may be more apt at arms, may be able to handle a gun better and to shoot straighter than a soldier in the United States Army. The civilian's skill in the matter of firearms does not raise him to the soldier's level of service nor merit its resultant reward. For the soldier, in taking his oath of allegiance to his country — which, incidentally, Sisters, includes obedience even unto death — has become one of his country's military forces, and partakes of all its might and power. In his case, the virtue of patriotism parallels in some measure what the virtue of religion does for us. He is possessed, as it were, by patriotism every moment of his day. We are possessed by religion, body and soul.

We are all familiar with that incident in the life of St. Francis when, inviting a Brother to go with him to the city to preach, he simply walked through the streets and returned without saying a word. When his companion remonstrated that he had not preached, the Saint replied that by walking through the street in their religious habit, they had preached a most powerful sermon. That is not a pious exaggeration; every Sister is a living sermon; she preaches not the spoken word but the vocal deed. Could any minister give as eloquent a sermon on the words: "We have here no lasting city but we look for one that is to come?" The text is powerfully taught by the Sister who has truly forgotten her people and her father's house, who uses no family name, who appears, unheralded in the hospital one day; and, after 3, 7, or 25 years of joyful service there, disappears without fanfare. And what sermons are daily preached by the daily living of our vows.

Poverty alone renders us a mystery to the world, and like all mysteries, it attracts and repels. Poverty is not the highest of our vows, but it is the first rampart we erect between ourselves and the world, and the one they can never understand. The world can understand, not the excellency, but under certain circumstances, the expediency of chastity. The world understands well the necessity of civic and military obedience, and it demands it in a measure harsher and more inconsiderate than would any religious Community. But poverty it does not understand. Every worldly enterprise is based on "What will it pay?" Every seeker of employment asks first, "What is the salary?" The goal of men and women in the world is to accumulate wealth, more and more wealth, to take care of all exigencies.

The religious, by her vow of poverty, preaches a serene lecture on reliance on the Providence of God. Individually, save as her duty directs, the Sister takes no thought for the morrow. And is it not a soul-exalting thought that if today, through some cataclysm of nature, fire, flood, tornado, earthquake, every material possession of your Community or of mine were to be destroyed; or if, as has happened in many countries, a greedy and hostile government should confiscate everything the Community owns, the individual Sister would feel no sense of loss. Rather would she rejoice that she could now feel the effects of personal poverty which the Community's former mode of life, necessitated by conditions, prevented her from experiencing. Whence comes that grace? From the state of perfection to which we are elevated by our vows. Even under present circumstances, no Sister claims anything as her own, yet through the many acts of charity which our vocations enable us to perform, we can say with the Apostle of the Gentiles that we are "Needy, though enriching many; having nothing and possessing all things."

By her vow of chastity, the religious preaches a greater truth than mind over matter: she preaches the victory of the spirit over the flesh. The chastity of the religious engaged in active works is not symbolized by the delicate lily which the slightest handling will blemish, nor the polished mirror, tarnished by a breath. No, her chastity is a bright and flaming sword with which she defends herself and defeats evil. Chastity enables Sisters to live in the world, to love every person in the world, but to love nothing that savors of the spirit of the world. Every step that a religious takes, every action that she does, is a protest against vice which she openly or indirectly meets. Those who have taken the vow understand to its depths our Lord's words: "He who loveth his life shall lose it." They have willingly foregone the life of wife and mother, a woman's ordinary role; that is, they have given up a lesser privilege for a greater one. They have given up the love of man for the love of a God; they elect to give not temporal life to a few children, but eternal life to many children.

By her vow of obedience, a Sister says to the world that happiness is not to be found in inde-

pendence, not in power, not in enforcing one's will and imposing one's way on others. She shows them that one infallible cure for the insecurity that grips the world of today is to desire only that the Will of God be accomplished. For a Sister does not give up her own will, as we ourselves so frequently define obedience. Obedience is not giving up of our will, for when we give a thing we ask nothing in return. No, it is an exchange — an exchange of our weak, fallible and always dangerous will for the strong, sure, and holy Will of God. To frustration, the root of so many psychoses, she is immune. Frustrations come from not accomplishing what we wish to accomplish. Now it is beyond the power of any creature to keep a fellow creature from doing God's Will. Trials, contradictions, opposition may come; sickness and what the world terms failure may come; but the obedient soul is serene through it all, knowing that none of these things can prevent her from doing God's Will, that none of them can separate her from the love of Christ Jesus.

Sisters, you for the most part work with, for, and among those who are ignorant of the Faith, and many are hostile to it. At times, you must feel that your efforts bear little fruit, your sacrifices are meagerly repaid. You wonder what more you can do. When the feeling grows oppressive, go aside with Christ and rest awhile. He does not ask that you do more, that you provide for more beds, make more easily available Catholic instruction, strive through the provision of greater recreational and social activities to attract non-Catholics and lessen their prejudices. He does not ask that you work longer hours, pray more devoutly, increase your sacrifices. Christ to whom you have given yourselves so completely by your vows just wants you to understand and appreciate the great plane to which He has raised you. He wants you to feel a joyous satisfaction to the very depths of your soul; He wants you, not to do, but just to be . . . to be that into which your vows have transformed you: His Beloved.

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PROBLEMS IN THE ADMINISTRATION AND DISCIPLINE OF THE JUNIORATE

Mother M. Regina, R.S.M.
Provincial Superior, Sisters of Mercy
Chicago, Illinois

An address given at the meeting of the Midwest Region of the Sister Formation Conference, Morrison Hotel, Chicago, April 24, 1958.

This is a very broad subject presenting many problems that would be impossible to treat adequately in a short time. Hence I shall enumerate some of the problems in both areas and dwell for a few minutes on several of them. Much time will be devoted to some of the specific problems during these days and at future meetings. You will note that some of our problems are similar to those in men's communities, some of which were discussed by our panelists this morning.

Canon 565 describes the work of the novitiate as a "forming of the mind." In the treatise of Reverend Elio Gambari on "*Sedes Sapientiae*, Its Implications for Religious Women," we heard that the juniorate was the novitiate in evolution, and again, that the juniorate was to be modeled after the novitiate. Now, in the forming of the mind, the mind must see, or know, the good before the person can be drawn toward the good. It is useless to attempt to train the will of the novice to obey, unless she understands the nature, importance, extension, and comprehension of obedience. It behooves us to help our young Sisters sharpen their intellects, so that they act from proper motives. Motivation plays a very important part in the training of the young. The intellect is the highest faculty of man and merits the highest type of development.

Our young Sisters should know that intellectual virtue is in itself good, but that intellectual development must be seen always in the context of religious

life. We must inculcate virtue, and as our beloved Cardinal told us yesterday, we must bring these young people to the realization that everything they do is in that act of the love of God they made when they chose to follow Him, and which they will confirm on their profession day. If the spiritual foundation is solid, we need have no fear of intellectual pride. The training in virtue can be just as real and effective when the Sister is applying the principles to study, as when she applies them to scrubbing the floor, washing dishes, or sorting the laundry. Thus we see that novitiate training should be as much devoted to the instruction of the intellect as to the education of the will.

The juniorate is a period following the novitiate during which time the young Sister deepens her spiritual formation, finishes her professional preparation, and as Monsignor Larraona puts it, is initiated into the apostolate.

The establishment of juniorates presents many problems. They are not insurmountable; there are solutions for them, but there is need of time, plus fortitude, patience, money, equipment, buildings and students.

One of the very first problems that confronts administration when the decision is made to establish a juniorate is to inform the Ordinaries of the various dioceses in which you teach, and the pastors of your schools, that you will not be able to supply any additional Sisters for the next two years, that is, if you are extending the time to two years.

The physical facilities present a problem to most communities. *Sedes Sapientiae* and the General Statutes of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, in giving the requisites for centers of training for the clergy, remind those responsible: "There must be available buildings situated in a place which is sufficiently healthful and spacious, prudently removed from contact with the world, and truly adapted for religious living." These centers are to be equipped with all the items necessary and useful for the complete fulfillment of their purpose. These centers must be furnished with libraries and all other tools and aids necessary for the investigation of the sciences and the proper cultivation of the arts according to the legitimate methods and demands of our age. "If these things are not attainable," according to *Sedes Sapientiae*, then, "the students must be sent to the center of another province, where the needs can be met."

This is one of the problems that time will have to take care of. Buildings are costly and cannot be put up overnight. Juniorates require careful planning. We should strive for the ideal, but we must make adaptations with the facilities we have and do the best we can until we are able to realize the ideal. And just what is the ideal setup, is a debatable question, I think. My personal opinion is, a separate house on or near the campus of a college conducted by the community. This decision alone presents many problems for the administrator. If the Juniorate is too far from the college there is the question of duplication of faculty, transportation of students, etc.

Selection of Candidates

The selection of candidates, while not a problem of the juniorate, nevertheless affects the juniorate, and hence a careful selection of postulants is essential. For the admission of candidates to the novitiate, according to *Sedes Sapientiae*, (this refers to congregations of men, but we can make application to our own Institutes) the prospective postulant must have the "moral and intellectual qualities, and possess physical and psychological fitness." It seems to me that if the juniorate program is to function smoothly, the postulants should be high school graduates, and there ought to be but one entrance date. I also think the postulancy term ought to be eleven or twelve months, so as not to break into an academic year for the remote retreat for reception, and for the canonical year.

Again, referring to *Sedes Sapientiae*, three points are given in regard to the "Integrity of the Whole Program of Training": (1) It should be completed by all. (2) There should be no dispensations. (3) There should be no shortening. (This is sound.) Pastors will plead, principals or superiors will call; you may be tempted to give in. Do not do it, Mothers and Sisters. See to it — no dispensations, no shortening, and completed by all.

The Mistress of Juniors

A fourth problem in the administration of a juniorate is the proper choice of a well-trained mis-

tress of juniors, whose sole duty should be to look after the spiritual and temporal well being of the juniors; one who knows the true hierarchy of values and who makes certain that first principles are not sacrificed for details. The mistress should be a woman of prayer, conscientious, patient, mature, prudent, and of above average intelligence. She must be endowed with the faculty of adaptability, and the ability to make decisive, sound judgments. The juniors should not be subjected to the restrictions of the novitiate; neither should they be granted all the freedom of the senior professed. It is here that the mistress must use good judgment.

Setting up a Sister Formation program with the proper integration of the spiritual and the intellectual does not begin in the juniorate, but the juniorate is merely a continuation of what was started in the postulate.

The Juniorate Training

We must always keep in mind that the Sister is a whole person consecrating herself to God, and, therefore, the whole person must be developed. Otherwise, we have unbalanced personalities instead—331—of integrated individuals who have matured spiritually and intellectually. Education of the whole person calls for a liberal education. The formation period must aid Sisters in their efforts to become mature, spiritual women, well equipped for the work of the apostolate, well-balanced personalities. They should, according to *Sedes Sapientiae*, "be filled with an effective and burning love for the Church; the defense of her rights; the preservation and spread of her teaching. The training should impress a character on their minds which will be a source of light and strength to meet their own difficulties and those of others." It should aid them to form judgments and make decisions, steep them in supernatural principles and establish in them habits of virtue. Again, *Sedes Sapientiae* sets the standard. "Education and training must be closely joined with love of prayer and contemplation of things divine. It should be well rounded with no part of the prescribed disciplines omitted. It should be a coherent training with each part integrated and synthesized in such fashion that all the disciplines together form one solid and properly adjusted system."

Part of the College

The task of planning such a program and implementing it is a major problem. Here the college plays an important part. If the program is to function smoothly, we suggest a committee on Sister Formation as part of the Community Educational Board. The committee would view the entire picture and make sure that the training is so integrated that it embraces the whole Sister, including the natural and supernatural elements. The committee should not be too large, and should include the mistress of juniors, novices, and postulants; the directress of studies, a psychologist, one or two others, and the provincial superior. This committee should study the program of each Sister to see if she is capable of carrying it, whether or not she is sufficiently challenged, and whether or not she has

adequate time for study. After the program is in operation, the mistress and the dean of students should check to see if all is well with the Sister student.

Careful selection of faculty is of major importance. Those selected should be spiritually as well as intellectually qualified. They must be dedicated people interested in the Sister Formation program.

-332- I should think we could judge from what is expected of the faculty for seminarians in order to discover what consideration must be given for the faculty of our juniorates and the entire Sister Formation program. The best is none too good. Since Sisters are to carry on the works of the Institute, they must have the best of training, and there must be perfect understanding among those responsible for this training. The Rt. Rev. Joseph A. Gorham, dean of Catholic Sisters College, Catholic University of America, in a talk given on "Objectives of Formation Personnel," at the Sister Formation meeting in 1955, said: "The integration will come when those who are best fit in spiritual training, and those who are best fit in intellectual or educational or professional training will cooperate on a very high plane."

Planning the Horarium

Arranging a suitable horarium may present problems. If the program is to be successful, the Sister must have time for study, and she should be made to realize that her study and work are integral parts of her religious life. Her intellectual development, as I said before, must be seen always in the context of her religious life. (She cannot accomplish much with a ten-minute period now, and a fifteen-minute period then. She must have long study periods.) All must keep in mind that religious spirit must suffer no detriment, but occupations which impede Sisters' studies must not be imposed or permitted. The community is making great sacrifices giving the time; it is the duty of all to co-operate.

In general, the hours marked on the horarium are those for the spiritual exercises to be performed daily in community, those for assigned duties, and those for breakfast, dinner, supper, recreation, rising and retiring. Some groups would leave the mistress of postulants, novices, or juniors free to set up her own horarium, with the approval of the provincial superior.

First Contact with Mission Life

Higher superiors must give careful consideration to the placement of these young Sisters when they have finished their formal training period. They should be assigned to houses distinguished for faithful observance of the Rule, so that in their first contact with mission life there will be nothing that is contrary to what they have been taught in the novitiate and juniorate. Their first year ought to be an internship under expert guidance. It would

seem well for the mistress of juniors from the juniorate to visit them during this first year out, and from time to time to call them in for conferences. For this reason, the juniors might be missioned within a reasonable distance from the juniorate. To have a junior Sister as a companion will make the adjustment to mission life a little easier. Besides, the problem of travel to and from the juniorate will be made easier because there will be no question of a partner.

In every mission where there are junior professed, I would recommend that there should be appointed a mistress who will look after the juniors and give them the guidance they will need in making the adaptations necessary for mission life. She should, I think, have a period with the juniors once a week, at which time it would seem that she could discuss the spirit of the Institute and the study of the vows. She should consult with the provincial mistress of juniors from time to time.

It is most helpful to have all the junior professed under the same roof for the summer where the mistress can give special guidance to those who have been exposed to the active life for one year.

I would recommend a thorough follow-up program with some good, prudent person responsible for these young Sisters. The first ten years of their active life are very important, and unless there are "revivals of the spirit" from time to time, they are apt to grow cold. A renovation program does much to renew the spirit. There must be a continuous growth in holiness, and the works of the Institute should never be put before personal development. Superiors must beware of the heresy of activity. Junior Sisters should not be permitted to take on extra work in the parish. Often, because young Sisters are willing and over-eager to please, superiors will take on extra activities that tax the Sisters' energy and rob them of time that should be spent in preparation; otherwise, the Sisters enter the classroom unprepared, and failure and frustration result.

Problems of Finance

Financing the juniorate program is of major importance. Communities must make sacrifices. No college is self-supporting, and the community college that sponsors the Sister Formation program must be subsidized in some way. Perhaps no two communities would handle this problem the same way. It is necessary to prepare an educational budget, and then plan to provide the means to meet the budget. It would take too long to go into that phase now, but it might be a good question for discussion later. Most communities are faced with a lack of facilities, a lack of funds, and a shortage of Sisters, all of which affect a Sister Formation program.

There is an old French proverb that runs something like this: Sometimes the good is left undone because the best cannot be obtained. Mothers and

Sisters, we may not be able to set up an ideal program, but let us make adaptations with what we have, and be satisfied with the good, if we cannot have the best.

Juniorate Discipline

Now, a word about the discipline of the juniorate. The modern girl, in view of her former freedom and independence and worldliness, cannot be expected to completely absorb and conform to community living in the manner of the mature professed religious in two or three short years. One does not change that quickly. The spiritual formation will take time and patience and must be thoroughly integrated with the intellectual. The young Sister should be made conscious of her dignity, and then she will strive to live her life according to a standard worthy of that dignity; but this conviction presupposes a solid formation, which is not achieved in two or three short years. There will be a gradual growth, and we must be willing to let the young Sister mature gradually. We are so apt to expect the young Sisters to think, and act and judge matters as we, who have had years of experience, think, and act and judge. We forget that when we were their age in religion, we did not exercise the maturity of judgment that we have today.

All real discipline is self-discipline. Now there can be outside incentives for this self-discipline, and in the juniorate there should be means to promote and maintain it. This, of course, involves various people and factors. There are certain disciplinary regulations that all must abide by.

While, as we said before, the juniors are not novices and should not be treated as such, neither should they be given the privileges of the senior professed, for they are still on probation, so to speak. Some system of reports on juniors seems to me essential. There are various means, and each community will work out its own system.

Twice yearly, I would suggest, reports of Sisters under temporary vows ought to be given by the mistress of juniors, the dean of students, and one or two faculty members. If in a mission house, reports ought to be given by the mistress, a councilor, and the principal; if in a hospital, by the mistress, the superintendent of nurses, and the administrator. That would mean that three people would report on each junior twice a year; hence, there would be six reports on each junior once a year. In the course

"In a General Chapter of the Community, consideration was given for a long time to the drawing up of a statement on the functions of the novice master, the regent and the professors on the subject of the students. One wished an exact text, another preferred a more general statement. Then a priest capitular made this wise observation that put an end to the discussion: We cannot delay over wishing to be precise, so as to say: One part of the novice or of the student Brother ought to belong to the novice master, another to the prior, this part to the regent, to the professor. . . . By thus anatomizing and dissecting a living subject, we certainly risk

of the three years each junior would have on file in the juniorate eighteen reports from which a summary might be made for consideration when a candidate is proposed for admission to final vows. The summary, together with the detailed reports, could be in the hands of the provincial superior when she holds the meeting for the admission to profession. The provincial and her council could review these reports periodically.

The mistress of juniors under this system could fill out a more detailed form; the others a less detailed report. In our community the local superior is mistress except where there are four or more juniors in one place. Then a mistress other than the local superior is appointed, and her duties are outlined for her so that the juniors, wherever they are placed, are supervised in the same manner.

No Constitutions are sufficiently detailed or explicit to suffice fully for the direction of religious life, and for that reason, a book of customs — a guide — a book of regulations, or whatever we wish to call it, would be a great help toward discipline in a community and particularly in a juniorate. This would be a help in regulating the exterior acts of religious life such as community exercises, the various offices and duties, and the methods of performing the characteristic works of the Institute. These would not be left to private interpretation. If such a book can be put into the hands of every individual in the community, that would be the solution of many problems. —333—

The discipline of a juniorate is quite well regulated by the training given, the exercises prescribed, the horarium followed, and the guidance of a good mistress of juniors. If the religious has been trained in an atmosphere conducive to ever deepening her spiritual and intellectual growth to maturity, problems will be at a minimum, because the Sister's character will be shaped, and she will accept religious discipline out of a general conviction and inner love.

I am sure that there are many problems of administration and of discipline that I have not touched upon, but, you will agree, that we all have problems and this method of getting together to discuss them and share our experiences proves helpful.

My problem was to provoke discussion in an effort to get the answers to some of our problems. I hope I have done that.

killing him, whereas we wish only his life, his formation to total development through the collaboration of all. It is important for each of us not to concentrate on himself and apply himself to defining his part of this total influence, for this would be to have a perpetual battleground of misunderstanding; but we should wish for a common collaboration in a unique sense."

Père E. W. Langlais, O.P., *Le maître des novices et le Maître spirituel dans les états de perfection. Leur office et leur formation* (Rome: Couvent des Dominicains, 1951), pp. 35-36.

PRACTICAL POINTS FOR DIRECTORS OF YOUNG RELIGIOUS

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During recent years an ever-increasing stress has been placed on the importance of properly training young religious. The Holy See has taken the lead in this policy, and it hardly needs defense. The nature of our times, the demands made on modern religious, as well as the background from which our vocations come, require constant effort to improve methods of training.

This emphasis on the training of the young affects in a special way those chosen to be the directors of the training. The obligation of properly training the young rests upon the Community. In every religious community, and in every separate branch or province thereof, individual religious are charged with the offices of master or mistress of novices, director of students, mistress of juniors, etc.

-334- The Church herself has high standards for those chosen to fill these offices. This is evident from the Sacred Canons which speak of the subject. When speaking of the master of novices, for example, she states that he should be "conspicuous for prudence, charity, piety, and religious observance."¹ When speaking of the prefect or master charged with the continuation of the training begun in the novitiate, Canon 588 requires the same qualities of soul in them as for the master of novices.

The need for these qualities is obvious. The work of these directors of souls is so very important that ideally they should have a perfect combination of all good qualities and be free from all bad ones. But often a religious appointed to such a difficult office is little consoled at reading of the qualities he should have. He enters upon his duties with much fear and a deep sense of inadequacy. What, in practice, can he do to make himself more equal to his task?

This article aims to single out some of the practical ways to strive to realize this ideal. The points treated are not intended to be a new set of rules distinct from what the Church in her official legislation requires. They are rather particular applications of the basic principles laid down by that law. They are also the fruit of personal experience, learned through the trial and error method during a few years in this type of work.

We shall speak throughout the article in terms of those charged with training men religious. Also, to avoid complications of expression, we shall use the term Director when referring to those charged with training the young. But since we are speaking of extra-confessional direction, the principles laid down are just as true and applicable to those in

charge of training young Sisters, and these are kept in mind throughout.

Humility

It is essential that a religious charged with training the young be deeply humble. It is to be presumed that the religious chosen for this office has already learned the first lessons of this virtue. If he is faithful to his task he will become ever more humble. This was the experience of St. Therese, the Little Flower, when she was appointed assistant mistress of novices. She described her experience very vividly in the following words: "As soon as I entered the sanctuary of souls, I saw at a glance that the task was quite beyond me, and placing myself in the arms of God, I did what a baby would do if it was frightened; I hid my head on my Father's shoulder, and said: 'You see, O Lord, that I am too little to feed your children. If You want me to give each one, on Your behalf, just what she needs, then fill my hand, and without leaving your arms, without as much as turning my head, I will pass on Your riches to those who come to me for food.'"²

The humility to be cultivated in forming young religious derives from a twofold source. In the first place, it is a humility in the face of the manifold workings of God's grace in the souls under one's care. We have all read in spiritual books that God's grace works differently in different souls. But because we usually have only our own experience to go on, we are not practically aware of the truth of this until we are in a position to know different souls. The Director of young religious comes to know them intimately, and he soon sees clearly that the growth of souls is the work of God's grace. And he also sees that the workings of that grace are as various as the individuals. He cannot therefore set out to form souls according to a blueprint that appeals to him personally. He must study the temperament and the inclinations of grace in each individual and guide each according to his own particular lights and needs. Such a manner of acting of necessity demands, and teaches, true humility. And unless one is willing to learn this lesson of humility he will inevitably fail in his task. The Director is merely an instrument in the hands of God. He must perform his task deeply conscious of this fact if he is to succeed in his purpose, namely, of recognizing and seconding God's work in individual souls.

The Director's second source of humility is found in the recognition of his own limitations. The ideal to be attained in the souls under his guidance is very high, and even the best qualified religious should feel very inadequate for so divine a work. How high the ideal is is clear from the *General Statutes* of the Sacred Congregation of Religious,

1. Can. 559, 1.

2. *The Story of a Soul*, translated by Michael Day, pp. 159-160.

appended to the Apostolic Constitution *Sedes Sapientiae* of Pope Pius XII, May 31, 1956. While this document is directed to clerical institutes of religious men, the principles are certainly valid for institutes of religious women as well:

In the novitiate or the equivalent probation, as well as throughout the entire subsequent period of training, the students must be thoroughly confirmed in the religious spirit; they are to become accustomed to prayer and meditation so that they develop a familiarity with God; they are to learn the Sacred Liturgy and live by it; they must strengthen their love and fidelity toward the Church and its Head; they are to cultivate and foster the desire for reparation and the salvation of souls; and strenuously practice the virtues, especially humility and the other virtues which are characteristic of evangelical perfection. They must do their utmost to study and esteem highly the excellence of their divine vocation; they must familiarize themselves with the spirit, purpose and laws of their own Institute, and become properly and wisely imbued with the same. (Can. 565, 1) Energetic efforts must be made that each and all shape their own character; that they accept religious discipline out of a personal conviction and inner love. They must be taught sincerity, so that they will shrink from deceit and fraud of any kind, be molded in fortitude and manly strength in order to acquire self-control. The entire training must pervade their inner being and strike deep roots in it.³

If such is the end product desired by Mother Church, obviously the ideal before the Director is a lofty one. Frequent recalling of the ideal will keep him from any complacency in any success he may seem to have. And daily evidence of the failures that he encounters should lead him to an ever deeper conviction of his inadequacy for his task.

The Director, therefore, has in the very nature of his work a great need for humility and in the same work he has the medicines that are designed to cure all pride. He should see gradually the great need to distrust his own ability and trust entirely in God who has given him the work to do. He must learn to live very close to God, be very devoted to the Holy Spirit and trust this Sanctifier of Souls to accomplish His purpose in spite of the lowliness of His instrument. Once more he can learn from the Little Flower: "The very fact that, left to myself, I could do nothing, made my task seem all the more simple; there was only one thing for me to do, unite myself more and more to God, knowing that He would give all the rest in addition. . . . I assure you that had I acted in any other way, had I relied on my own resources, I should have had to lay down my arms at once."⁴

Charity

A second fundamental quality to be cultivated by the Director of young religious is a strong universal charity that is truly supernatural. In his position he will deal closely with many individuals, all of them very different one from another. They will differ in their home and family background,

their national origin, their training, etc. All of these factors result in great differences in temperament, habits of thought and action and outlook on life in general. The one appointed to train them into living images of Christ will not be able to remake each of them according to his own tastes. He must take them as he finds them and build upon what they already have. He will bring to his work his own peculiar temperament and outlook, and many times it will not blend well with those of his subjects. He will also bring his own weaknesses, habits that have not been properly corrected in conformity with the spirit of Christ whom he represents. No matter how much he may want to, he cannot take on a new personality ideally suited to meet with all differences and attain the unity of spirit and purpose with his subjects that he desires. If there is anything that makes one aware of the faults in his own character, it is to be appointed to the task of forming the spirit of others.

While he cannot work an immediate transformation in himself, he can and must strive to iron out the differences that obviously exist between himself and many of his subjects. Christ our Lord has given us the means to do this in the truly supernatural charity that He taught so clearly. The Director must learn to disregard his own likes and dislikes, and embrace all in the charitable heart of a true father. Natural tastes will remain with him and plague him in his efforts. He will tend to favor certain ones of his subjects because he has a community of spirit with them. He will tend to neglect others because of the lack of this bond. But he must strive in season and out of season to cut at the roots of these natural instincts and learn to love all in Christ and be willing to go to all lengths for any one of them. Like the Good Shepherd, he must know his sheep and be a true father to each of them. Otherwise he will fail in his purpose toward those of his flock who do not appeal to his natural tastes. Young religious have an instinctive way of realizing when they are just tolerated, and their efforts to deepen their spiritual life are paralyzed by this realization.⁵

5. The seventeenth century Dominican, Louis Chardon, in his classic book, *The Cross of Jesus*, has some very stimulating comments along this line that might well be meditated often by those who have authority over others:

"... superiors sometimes overlook the importance which their subjects have under their adorable Head and do not reflect that their commands are supposed to increase and perfect the mystical Christ. Conscious of their own authority, they forget that they have not been made superiors so that they can confound and crush others, but to lift them up, to elevate them to a condition which is above nature and belongs to the divine order. Let them ponder over the fact that power in the Church is not armed with a sword but with charity. Authority transformed by charity will have no other inclination than that which charity gives it, no other properties but those which St. Paul assigns to charity, no other goal but that of charity itself. Those who hold positions of authority will therefore consider themselves, in relation to their subjects, only in the light of the equality through charity which they enjoy in union with Christ. As their Head He has treated His mystical members with a most tender love and has reserved the most profound sufferings for Himself. He is therefore called the Good Shepherd because His power is used chiefly to lift from the shoulders of others the yokes which in His mercy He would bear in their place. Only the hireling or the false shepherd strikes, kills or destroys. Thus, when St. Paul spoke to the faithful it was always with much respect and love: 'I beseech you brethren, by the mercy of God,' (Rom. 12:1) or: 'by the charity of the Holy Spirit,' (Rom. 15:30) or on another occasion, 'I adjure you by the mildness and modesty of Christ.' (2 Cor. 10:1)" Vol. I, pp. 25-26.

3. *Sedes Sapientiae*, Official English Translation, pp. 50-51.

4. *The Story of a Soul*, p. 160.

Only a fully-developed charity can root out the selfishness that the Director brings with him to so sublime a work. Only such a charity will enable him to maintain the habitual cheerfulness that is so necessary for winning the confidence of his subjects that he may lead them to Christ. He may have to strive long for the attainment of this ideal, but he must never lose sight of it and with patient effort he can come closer to it. The many faults he will commit in the process will, if seen in the right light, contribute to the deepening of humility. And humility will dispose him to a more perfect practice of charity.

Kindness Balanced with Firmness

-336- A special aspect of the virtue of charity that is so important as to deserve special treatment is the habit of kindness in dealing with one's subjects. We speak of it as the habit of kindness, indicating that the spirit of kindness should pervade all the Director's dealings with the young religious. In other words, his spirit of kindness should be such that when his subjects think of him they will think of him as a kind and considerate person above all else. A Director is required by the nature of his office to issue admonitions and corrections on occasion. Because of undue emphasis on this duty, he is often thought of as a person to be feared rather than loved. It seems that in the past tradition has sometimes required that such a person be what is usually called a "holy terror." Because he was such, his disciples welcomed with a sigh of relief the day when they were delivered from his hands and spent the rest of their days telling horror stories of the days of their youth. To our mind, when young religious carry away unpleasant memories of the time of their training for reasons such as this, a most unfortunate state of things exists.

Undoubtedly, the Director must be firm; he must at times give corrections and admonitions. Sometimes he may have to carry on what has all of the earmarks of a campaign against the faults of some of his subjects. None of them are consummate saints, much as he might wish that they were. But even when he must correct he must not forget the norms of charity taught by Christ and well expressed by Father Chardon:⁶ "Power in the Church is not armed with a sword but with charity." To be kind and to be firm are by no means contradictory notions when both are rooted in a well ordered charity. The young are willing to accept severity when they see that it comes from the charitable heart of a father. Yes, they will even overlook faults of anger on occasion if they know from clear evidence that their superior truly loves them. Sometimes a subject's gratefulness for correction surprises the Director.

The delicate art involved in properly balancing kindness with firmness has to be cultivated. It does not come natural to see faults and to face and correct them with complete stoical indifference. An

amount of passion may even help at times to convey the point effectively. But the Director must at all costs let his anger be moderate and brief. Once he has made his point, he must return to his usual manner of kindness as if nothing ever happened. This will impress upon the subject, as nothing else can, that the correction was given, not because of a grudge, but out of true fatherly interest in his welfare.

Because the Director remains human, he will at least occasionally make mistakes in this. His anger may be all out of proportion to the fault or endure too long. When this happens he should never try to justify it before his subjects by continuing to "play the part" over a period of time. Rather, once he realizes that he has made such a mistake, he should try as soon as possible to remedy it. And there is no better way than by an extraordinary show of kindness. We demand this type of sincerity of subjects and the Director should not neglect to go before them with good example.⁷

There are directives on this point in the General Statutes of *Sedes Sapientiae*, where it is stated:

The superiors and masters of novices shall avoid both excessive rigor which breaks or saps the strength and extreme kindness which gratifies nature and weakens the will. Let them intelligently correct defects and not discourage, but rather sustain and strengthen good inclinations.⁸

The ideals are high indeed, but it is only to the degree that the Director follows them that he will succeed in the purpose expressed in the same paragraph: "Let them form religious who are men of God and vigilant and generous apostles of our age."⁹

Sympathetic Understanding

Another very important quality to be cultivated by Directors of young religious is sympathetic un-

7. His Holiness, Pope Pius XII gives us very wise advice apropos of this subject in his Apostolic Constitution *Sedes Sapientiae*:

"In fulfilling this very important office, educators should adopt as their first rule the one Our Lord laid down in the Gospel, saying, 'I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. . . . I am the Good Shepherd and I know mine, and mine know me.' St. Bernard expressed it in these words: 'Realize that you must be mothers rather than masters to your subjects: strive more to be loved than feared.' The Council of Trent itself, in its very frequent exhortations to Ecclesiastical Superiors, holds 'that the first admonition that should be impressed on them is to bear in mind that they are shepherds and not oppressors and that they ought so to preside over their subjects as not to lord it over them, but to love them as sons and younger brothers. They should strive by exhortation and admonition to deter them from what is unlawful for fear that they might be obliged, in case of transgression, to coerce them by due punishments. In regard to those who, through human frailty, may have committed some offense, the Superiors should follow the precept of the Apostle—i.e., reprove, entreat, rebuke them in all kindness and patience, for benevolence toward those to be corrected effects more than severity, exhortation more than threat, and charity more than authority. But if on account of the gravity of the offense there is need of the rod, then is rigor to be tempered with gentleness, judgment with mercy, and severity with clemency so that discipline, wholesome and necessary for the people, be preserved without harshness and that those who have been chastised be corrected, or, if they are unwilling to repent, that the others may, by the wholesome example of their punishment, be deterred from vices.'"

8. *Ibid.* p. 51.

9. *Ibid.* p. 51.

6. See note 5 above.

derstanding of them and their problems. This is so obvious that it may seem unnecessary to treat of it. But there are certain aspects of it that are easily overlooked by those even who are vitally aware of its necessity.

The relationship that exists between Directors and the young religious is one of father-son or mother-daughter as the case may be. One of the principal functions of the Director is to be the confidant of those under his care. Ordinarily the young religious is expected to bring his problems and difficulties to the Director. To this end, the Director is required to call in each individual periodically for a private conference. The purpose of these conferences is to give the young the opportunity to receive the guidance they need to grow and develop. Every young religious will have his problems and difficulties. These will not necessarily be major problems, nor will they all be of a negative nature. They will, in fact, be as varied as life itself so that the Director is never surprised at what turn a conference may take.

The Director will have more experience than his subjects. His insight may be so acute that he may see to the heart of a difficulty almost immediately. It is indeed an advantage if he can do so, but he must beware of giving too hasty and too simple solutions to them. Even though he may be able to see immediately that the problem is only imaginary, or that it is merely an inevitable phase of growing up, he must not for that reason dismiss it without hearing it through with patience and understanding. To act in this way leaves the subject with a sense of disappointment and frustration.

It is essential that a Director endeavor to see the problems presented to him as they appear to the mind of the one who presents them, rather than as he sees them. In other words, he must realize that the problem may be very real in the mind of the one who has it, even though he knows that it is purely imaginary, or at least very minor. Stated another way, he must make a clear distinction between the problem considered objectively and the same problem considered subjectively. The Director, being a man of greater knowledge and experience, is presumed to be able to see the case in its objective light. However, he must never forget that subjectively, or as it exists in the subject's mind, it may have an altogether different character. If he solves the difficulty too quickly, he may be solving the objective problem while leaving the real problem very much unresolved. The end to be gained is to clear up the problem as it exists in the mind of the one who has it. It must be solved, of course, according to objective principles, but in such a way that the subject sees the solution clearly.

This means that the Director will many times be required to do a lot of listening. He will have to be patiently attentive to explanations of things that he already understands. But this listening is necessary for the solution of the difficulty in the mind of the

subject. He must not only listen to the explanations, but show that he understands how the matter appears to the subject. Therefore, what is required is a combination of sympathy and understanding. When difficulties are discussed and settled in this way, the subject goes away satisfied. His respect for his Director is rather increased than lessened and he will be disposed to return again when he has further problems.

We have mentioned the need for objectivity in the Director. If he is to have this quality, he must himself be a complete man, one with maturity of outlook and balance of judgment. If narrow ideas are harmful to the individual, they are no less than deadly in those whose task it is to form others. It is a fact of experience that young religious are more influenced by what their superior is than by what he says. A well-balanced mind and a healthy outlook must be apparent in all that he says and does. His goal is to lead his subjects to full maturity. "It must include the whole man in all his vocational aspects in order to form him in every way into a 'perfect man in Christ Jesus' (Col. 1:28)"¹⁰ He will succeed in this only in the degree that he has himself that fulness in Christ which embraces the whole man.—337-

The Director must be, therefore, the embodiment of the ideal of true Christian humanism in the Thomistic sense. He must look down on nothing that is good, but must see various goods according to their relative merit and their bearing on the Christian and religious life.

To realize the ideal will require a great amount of self-control. It does not come natural to keep an even and balanced approach to the many difficulties that confront the Director. He comes to his job with his own peculiar set of weaknesses that will get in the way of the perfect fulfillment of his office. In fact, weaknesses and faults that were no great handicap in living his own personal life will stand out clearly in his new environment. No doubt, every one who is in the process of adjusting to this work wishes many times that he had worked more sincerely on his weaknesses in the past.

Once he is in the position, however, he will see the need to work hard to restrain his own passions, especially that of anger. He must make deliberate effort to keep his reactions to persons and situations moderate. This means he must try to keep a clear and objective outlook on things and moderate his words and actions accordingly. In doing this he will exert what is perhaps his most powerful influence on those under his care. Seeing in their Director the perfect example of a well-ordered life and self-control, subjects will instinctively admire and try to imitate him. And they will be deterred from all narrowness and excessive sentiment in building up their own spiritual life.

Ability to Make Decisions

Canon Law requires that the Master of Novices and equivalent officials be "conspicuous for pru-

¹⁰ *Sedes Sapientiae*, p. 7, n. 21.

dence."¹¹ From what has already been said, no one will question the need for this all important virtue. Above all, if one is to realize the ideal prescribed in the previous section he must be very prudent.

One particular function of the virtue of prudence that is very relevant to the office of Director is the ability to make decisions. These decisions occur daily and range all the way from deciding whether someone should go to the doctor, to whether another should be allowed to make profession. The limitless possibility of making mistakes is evident if the one who is to make these decisions lacks prudence.

Perhaps the ideal in this matter might be stated as follows: The Director should have the courage to make decisions promptly in matters of little consequence, and he should have the good sense to suspend judgment and await a clearer light in really difficult matters.

Let us consider the first of these norms. The Director is called upon to make many small decisions on which no great consequences depend. To hesitate unnecessarily in making these small decisions inflicts a great hardship on his subjects. They are required to come to their superior and ask for these permissions and they find this duty an intolerable burden if they can never get a *yes* or *no* answer. Some of these decisions deal with very insignificant matters which have little or no bearing on the religious spirit. Others may deal with matters that are relatively small, but which require vigilance lest the young fall into bad habits, as for example in matters of mortification. When dealing with the first of these, the Director should never make difficulties in things that are just and reasonable. When dealing with those of the second category, he should act on the principle that he should not grant every desire of his subjects, but that neither should he refuse every request that is out of the ordinary. Such a policy will instill in the young a spirit of the proper moderation and it is to be hoped that they will learn gradually to decide for themselves whether it is proper and prudent to ask for this or that permission. Thus, a sense of responsibility will be fostered that will bear fruit throughout their life.

We stated as the second norm to be followed that the Director should have the good sense to suspend judgment and await a clearer light in really difficult matters. This prudent caution is just as important as the decisiveness in smaller matters mentioned above. Not all the decisions that a Director will have to make will be small and insignificant. Situations will arise, for example, which touch on matters of policy and which are rightly within the province of the higher superior to decide. He who is merely a delegate of the higher superior would be rash to decide in such matters. He may have to make an immediate decision at times, but it should be of a temporary and conditional nature until he can consult with the higher authority.

11. Can. 559, 1.

An outstanding example of a major decision which demands caution is that of deciding vocations. No one is long in a position such as we are treating before he meets this most exacting part of his work. Since he is given a major part in training the young, he is naturally expected to know them more intimately than anyone else. When the time of profession comes, the higher superiors will expect him to pass mature judgment on their worthiness. Here the Director faces his most difficult decisions. The decisions must take into account God's eternal plan as well as the observable facts of the case.

The decision of a vocation is not a matter to be settled on the spur of the moment. The final judgment must be preceded by all the steps that go to make up a mature and prudent judgment. Usually, the religious under the Director's charge will be divided very unevenly into three groups: 1) There will be those, and we have every reason to expect that they be the greater majority, who give every sign of a divine vocation and a willingness to follow it. They may not be saints, or even what we would call ideal religious, but they do show real promise. These present no difficulty in the way of decision. Every effort should be spent to help these to develop the willingness and the qualities they have. And while they will not all develop at the same pace, they will justify the hope placed in them and be admitted to profession without difficulty. 2) At the other extreme, there will be one occasionally who shows a disturbing lack of these qualities, and especially of the generosity essential for a religious. These also will present no real difficulty. After all effort has failed, they will be dismissed at the proper time if they do not leave on their own. 3) In between these two extremes, there will also be those who give reason for concern regarding these basic qualifications.

This latter is the group that will test the Director's prudence and ability. An individual will indeed have good points, but over against them there will also be bad indications. The decision to be made is whether the good points are such that they outweigh the bad and give sufficient promise of reducing the bad points to a safe degree. Before such a combination of qualities, the Director may find himself in a state of perplexity in judging of the positive evidence required by the Code of Canon Law.

Obviously, such a case cannot be settled overnight. Were he to become aware of such a situation only on the eve of profession, the only prudent course would be to prolong the time of probation and await clear evidence. But fortunately, such cases have a way of showing themselves long in advance. In the practical order, signs of disorder will appear long before the decision must be made so that there will be sufficient time to observe and test the individual. By the time a final decision is required of him, the Director will ordinarily have had all the means necessary to make a mature decision.

When a Director sees that he has such a problem on his hands the very natural tendency is to become alarmed. But it is all important that he resist the feeling of panic. In solving the problem, he will

need to have all his powers at his disposal and undue fear can do much to hinder the calmness of mind with which he should face the question. Let him remember that there is time to consider the matter and that the decision is not pressing here and now. During that time, he will be able to observe, discuss and pray over the matter. Above all, let him remember that if he is intensely interested in the right solution, God is far more so. Therefore, let him trust in God and take his time, and the darkness will usually disperse little by little. A calm approach will usually be better, and he will see in the end that God was with him all the way.

It is indeed conceivable that the Director find himself at the point where a decision is imperative and still be plagued with persistent doubt. What should he do in this case? If the doubt has been serious and prolonged over a long period of time, then he should not hesitate to decide in the negative. Mother Church does not want us to go to the extreme of giving the benefit of the doubt when the good name and welfare of the religious state are involved.

In making such important decisions, two extremes are to be avoided. In the first place, the Director should not be afraid to send someone away for fear that God might have given him a vocation, though he is not convinced that He has. God expects us to consult His interests first, last and always. But He asks us to use our common sense in doing so. When God does not give us clear signs of a divine vocation, He does not expect us to go to impossible limits just in case He has. At the other extreme, the Director should not be excessively afraid of admitting someone who is not truly called. We say *excessively* afraid. He must, of course, use prudent vigilance lest he admit the unworthy. This is virtuous and is expected of him. What he must avoid is solving every doubt automatically in favor of the institute just to be on the safe side. The prudent course is in the middle. The Director must consult the interests of God and must also safeguard the well being of the community. But he cannot make pawns of human souls just to have peace of conscience. With ordinary prudence and a deep trust in God, the Director will be able to make the right decision. And once he has made it, he should leave it in the hands of God and not even reconsider it. Any other manner of acting would make the office of a Director an intolerable burden, and God does not want it to be that.

Tactfulness

One final quality is very important for the Director of young religious: tactfulness. By tactfulness we mean the ability to get along with and to harmonize the various persons and departments involved in training the young.

The nature of the Director's office is unique. Ordinarily he is clothed with delegated authority from the higher superior. This means that he is acting in the name of and is immediately accountable to the higher superior in the training of the

young. The group that makes up his flock is usually only a part of a larger community. While having authority over his subjects in most matters, he is subject to a local superior as regards his own personal life, and both he and his subjects are under the same superior in matters pertaining to the common life. When the young religious under his care are in studies, the Director does not escape the influence of those who are teaching them. All of this means that he finds himself a kind of middle man between the various elements. For those who have experienced the effects of this, no further explanation is necessary. For those who have not, no explanation is possible.

In such a situation, it is inevitable that complications will arise in human relations, complications that are as varied as the elements involved. Since the Director is the only one who has immediate relations with all the parties concerned, it usually falls to his lot to produce, preserve, or restore the peace and harmony that is all important. Difficult as this may be, it is not impossible if the Director is tactful.

In meeting this challenge, all the qualities considered in this article will be called into play. The Director must be humble in accepting the corrections and criticisms that he will receive from time to time. He must be charitable in judging the motives of those who may be excessively critical of his work or of his subjects. He must be kind and considerate in listening to complaints that come from outside his sphere, and yet firm in upholding the interests of his subjects who have no refuge but in him. His sympathetic understanding must extend to the varieties of temperament and points of view that cause him difficulty. And his prudence must be such that he will not be swayed by every wind, but weigh, evaluate and act upon the criticisms that are offered for his own personal improvement and that of his work.

If he has all these qualities, the Director will be the tactful man that is necessary for so delicate a task. He will be able to make his way through the intricacies of his job and leave in his path peace and harmony between the various factions. In this, his contribution to the common good of community life can be of extreme value.

Needless to say, the Director should be aware of the valuable contribution that those around him can make toward the formation of the young. He should not adopt the attitude that he alone is to have any influence on his subjects. Of course, the personal guidance and matters of discipline must be centralized in his hands. But at the same time, he must realize that he cannot accomplish everything single handed. In the very nature of things, the young religious will come under the influence of other religious in the community, as for example, those who are teaching them. It would be very small minded on the part of the Director to resent the good influence that these religious can and should have on his subjects. He should rather welcome, and on occasion even solicit, the help of others. This com-

mon effort, achieved in a spirit of Christian charity, will best attain the desired end.

Before concluding, a word might be added on the desirable age for one who is to fill the difficult office of Director. It is our conviction that ordinarily the one chosen to guide the young in the path of holiness should be as close to them in age as is reasonably possible. By this we mean that when a young religious can be found who has proven himself to be prudent and stable, he should be considered the best choice for this position. It is imperative that young people, even young religious, be understood if they are to be helped. And with the fast changing conditions of modern life, it is ordinarily very difficult for one who is older to really understand the mentality of those who are entering the religious life today. This rule, obviously, admits of exceptions but it is still a good general rule.

Conclusion

-340- In this article, we have listed and commented upon what we considered some of the principal qualities to be cultivated by those who are chosen to further the training of young religious. We do not pretend to have exhausted the subject. Many other points could be treated, and the ones treated could be applied in greater detail. No one is more aware of this than the Director himself. Canon Law states in a few brief words what is required of the Master and Director of young religious. Living up to the standards of Canon Law involves many prac-

tical applications of the general principles. We have tried here to single out a few of the more important of these.

As in living the religious life itself, the Director will many times see the sharp contrast between the ideal to be striven for and his failure to attain that ideal. And just as one must be patient with himself and humbly dependent upon the grace of God in his own personal spiritual strivings, so also must the Director in his work. He must return frequently to the consideration of the ideal and keep striving to reach it. He must remember that he is not alone in his work, but that he is an instrument of the Holy Spirit, who is the real Director of souls. If he tries to use his talents to the full and trusts in the Holy Spirit to supply for his weakness, he will succeed in the work that the same Holy Spirit has given him to do.

The appointment to the work of training the young invariably means that one is removed from the external apostolate proper to one's order or congregation. This can be a real sacrifice when all one's training and ideals have been directed to that apostolate. But we must remember that this is a necessary and very fruitful sacrifice for it is made solely that the Director may form future apostles. It should be a consolation to him to realize that in his work his zeal is in reality finding a wider scope. In God's all-loving Providence, his sacrifice will reap a rich harvest through the work for souls that his present disciples will do in the future.

NATIONAL SF CHAIRMAN RECEIVES HONORARY DEGREE

The honorary degree of Doctor of Laws was bestowed June 7 on Mother M. Philothea, F.C.S.P., national chairman of the Sister Formation conference and provincial superior of the Pacific Coast province of the Sisters of Charity of Providence. The degree was conferred at the commencement exercises of Saint Mary's college, St. Mary's, California. The citation recalled Mother Philothea's "outstanding contributions to the upgrading of educational standards in the preparation of Sisters for their professional work in hospitals and schools."

SFC CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ELECTS THREE NEW MEMBERS

The national Sister Formation Consultative Committee has elected three new members to replace those whose terms have expired. Election took place at the committee's meeting during the annual NCEA convention in April.

The new consultants are Very Rev. A. A. Lemieux, S.J., Very Rev. Francis J. O'Neill, C.S.S.R., and Brother Bonaventure Thomas, F.S.C.

Father Lemieux is president of Seattle University, past chairman of the Northwest region of the NCEA, member of the National Commission for the

Accreditation of Teacher Education, and member of the Northwest SFC consultative committee.

Father O'Neill, who holds a doctorate in Canon Law, is rector of St. Joseph's Seminary, Kirkwood, Mo.

Brother Bonaventure Thomas, a past president of Manhattan College and a past president of the College and University Department of the NCEA, is secretary of education of the New York province, Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Retiring consultants are Most Rev. Bryan J. McEntegart, Rt. Rev. John J. Voight, and Rev. John F. Murphy.

Canadian Religious Congress Plans Courses for Sisters

The Canadian Religious Congress has recently commissioned the Very Rev. Gabriel J. Ehman, C.S.S.R., to promote in Western Canada a program of religion courses for Sisters. The first series will be given at Providence School, Midnapore, Alberta, Aug. 11-26. Courses will be offered in Ascetical and Dogmatic Theology, Sacred Scriptures, and Catechetical Methodology.

Father Ehman, vice provincial of the Redemptorist Fathers in Edmonton, will be the lecturer in ascetical theology. The Jesuit Fathers are supplying three of the lecturers: Rev. Roderick A. F. McKen-

zie, S.J., professor of Old Testament exegesis at the Jesuit Seminary, Toronto; Rev. John I. Hochban, S.J., dean of theology at the same institution; and Rev. Robert W. Meagher, S.J., St. Stanislaus Novitiate, Cleveland, Ohio.

Arrangements for the sessions are cared for by Sister Beatrice of the Cross, F.C.S.P., Providence Provincial Administration, Midnapore, Alberta.

A letter from Most Rev. Francis P. Carroll, bishop of Calgary, states: "I am certain that all the religious communities will use the valuable opportunity which the school will provide their members, to renew and develop their knowledge of the Sacred Sciences, so necessary for the religious life and the apostolate."

THIRTY SFC DELEGATES ATTEND NC TEPS MEETING

Thirty representatives of the Sister Formation conferences took part in the 13th national meeting sponsored by the committee on Teacher Education and Professional Standards at Bowling Green university, Bowling Green, Ohio, June 24-28. Theme of the conference was cooperative development of the teacher education program. The meeting was co-sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Council of Learned Societies, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Research council, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the Council on Cooperation in Teacher Education, the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

The invitation to the Sister Formation conference to send 30 delegates to the sessions continues the cooperation existing between the TEPS commission and SFC since the Sister Formation conferences were first organized.

LITURGY FOR SISTERS DISCUSSED AT CONVENTION

"The Role of Liturgy in the Formation of the Catholic Teacher" was discussed by Sister M. Emil, I.H.M., SFC Executive Secretary, at the 11th annual convention of the National Catholic Music Educators Convention. The association met at Pittsburgh, May 11-15.

Sister Mary Emil showed the place of liturgy in relation to the objectives of the Sister Formation movement. "I can summarize," she said, "by quoting Archbishop Cushing to the effect that 'the success of the liturgical apostolate depends on finding its place in the universal apostolate.'"

The liturgical apostolate will never find its place in the universal apostolate until we understand not only the liturgical apostolate but the universal apostolate. And understanding the universal apostolate is a big order, calling for careful and prolonged Sister formation—formation to its motivation through theology, formation to its rationale through phi-

losophy and the social sciences, formation to its technique through social psychology, communication, literature, and the arts.

Suppose that we take Bishop Wright's statement that the Mass can be an instrument of international order. Can we make this meaningful, or to put it more clearly, can we really make the Mass an instrument of international order unless we know a good deal about international order and how to act upon it, as well as a good deal about the Mass?

Sister Mary Emil also served as moderator of the discussion on "Spiritual and Intellectual Formation of the Novice."

Schedule of SFC Lectures

Sister Mary Emil, I.H.M., SFC executive secretary, is scheduled to speak at the College of St. Mary of the Woods, St. Mary of the Woods, Indiana, June 29; Sacred Heart college, Wichita, Kans., Aug. 3; the Mental Health Institute, College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minn., Aug. 6; Institute of Spirituality, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind., Aug. 11; and the Institute of Spirituality, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Aug. 19. She will take part in the Marquette Sister Formation Workshop, Aug. 13-18; and in the workshop session of the National Liturgical Week meeting, Cincinnati, Ohio, Aug. 21. —341—

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

Sister M. Humiliata, I.H.M., president of the Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles, presided at a meeting of superiors of Sisters attending Immaculate Heart college. Purpose of the meeting was the discussion of cooperative planning in problems of Sister education and possibilities for the pooling of resources. The meeting, held March 20, brought together representatives of all Communities having Motherhouses in the Los Angeles area.

Rev. Mother M. Ursula, delegate to all regional SF conferences in the Southwest SFC region since its inception and former novice mistress of the community, was recently elected to the office of superior general of the Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco.

Fellowships for Sisters is the subject of an address to be given Aug. 22 by Rev. William Dunne, S.J., N.C.E.A. associate secretary for

EAST the College and University Department. Father Dunne will speak at the triennial convention of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, Newark, N. J.

The Liturgical Committee of the Archdiocese of Boston has announced its program for the third year of liturgical studies for Communities of Sisters in the Boston area. Background for topical discussion is the papal program of the Mystical Body, Liturgy, and Social Action. Organizational points are tentatively headed, "What is a Christian?" and

"What does a Christian do?" The connection between worship and fraternal charity will be paralleled with the relation between contemplation and action in the lives of most modern religious.

The first year program, open only to the Sisters of St. Joseph, developed (1) general topics on liturgy and religious life, (2) the Mass, and (3) the liturgical year. The second series stressed the sacraments. Meetings were held on Sunday afternoons for two hours. Participants were given lists of recommended books and periodicals to accompany the work of the study sessions.

Recent pronouncements by the Holy Father, directives emanating from the Holy See, and a progressive movement and organization

SOUTH in the United States, have put the ideas and ideals of Sister Formation in the forefront of thought, especially among Catholics interested in education and religious life. Who had not heard of the *Everett Curriculum*?

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One community's response to the insistence on spiritual, intellectual and professional training of the young is the newly established Saint Mary House of Study on the campus of the University of Dallas.

Beginning in September, 1958, postulants of the Sisters of Saint Mary of Namur will reside in the beautiful, modern two-story, brick structure recently completed as a House of Studies. Following a curriculum adapted from the Everett plan, the young women will study theology, philosophy, art, music, English and biology. University professors will conduct classes for them in their own classrooms at the house of study. This arrangement will obviate the necessity of having the postulants mix in classes with lay students of either sex. However, the advantages of a university campus will be at their disposal. Library and laboratory facilities will be especially beneficial. Moreover, the quiet of the rural area will prevent any interruption of the "peaceful seclusion of the life of meditation and study."

Having completed a nine-month program of college studies, the postulants go to the novitiate house where they spend one year in strict religious formation. Dogma, morals, liturgy, spiritual life and vows will be their study during their canonical year. Particular attention is paid to the Constitutions and Directives and characteristic spirit of the Congregation.

During the second year of novitiate, the novices resume moderately their intellectual and professional formation. Although they will continue to live at the novitiate house in Fort Worth, they will attend classes twice a week at the house of study.

By the time the novice is ready to pronounce her first vows (nearly three years from the time of her entrance) she will have completed an equivalent of 56 credits toward her Bachelor's degree.

The house of study will then be her home for two more years. The juniorate as it is envisioned by the Holy See and expressed by Rev. Elio Gambari, S.M.M., has as its purpose "to continue, consolidate, and perfect the general and special religious instruction and at the same time provide the professional education necessary for proper apostolic activity — the whole animated and guided by a personal religious development which is the individual's response to the religious and professional training."

Saint Mary House of Study complies well with the directives concerning environment: it is "sufficiently healthy and roomy" and "prudently removed from contact with the world." However, the yearly influx of the young Sisters and their continued residence for three years will, even for a small congregation, make a juniorate of some size. It is therefore probable that within three years an additional wing, including more classrooms and living quarters, will be built. Even now preliminary plans are being made for that addition. Furthermore, the addition is expected to bring more completely to realization the directive concerning isolation of the juniors from other Sisters. The Holy See points out that "it is necessary to apply in this matter the separation that the Code prescribes for the novices." (Sisters who belong to the teaching faculty and administration of the University of Dallas also reside at Saint Mary.)

When the juniors have completed their Bachelor of Arts or Science degrees, they will then have a maximum of three years of active apostolic work before they pronounce perpetual vows. (The Sisters of Saint Mary have a six-year period of temporary profession.) It is believed that these years will help the young to adjust themselves to the Congregation and the apostolate before they commit themselves irrevocably to it.

This is one Congregation's response to the directive which Father Gambari describes as being "not merely of counsel but of obligation."

— Sister Francis Marie, S.N.D.

The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Houston, Texas, voted at their recent General Chapter to establish a juniorate for the post-novitiate training of their members. Newly elected superior general is Mother M. Fidelis. The Chapter convened in May.

The Dominican Sisters with motherhouse at New Orleans, La., report that the first group of Sisters trained under the Sister Formation program received degrees at the graduation exercises of St. Mary's Dominican college, May 25, 1958. Mother M. Imelda, O.P., is superior general.

Ground will be broken in July for a three-story science building and a four-story residence hall, the first two units of the developmental program of Nazareth college, Nazareth, Ky. The community utilizes the college facilities for the education of the Sisters.

The Benedictine Institute of Sacred Theology is being inaugurated this Summer at the College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, Minn. It has the hearty approval of the Most Rev. Bartholome, bishop of St. Cloud, and will be directed by

MIDWEST Rev. Paschal Botz, O.S.B., of St. John's abbey, Collegeville. The session extends from June 23 to Aug. 1. The courses are on the graduate level, and this first Summer include Dogmatic Theology, Moral Theology, Sacred Scripture and Church History. More than 60 Sisters have enrolled.

On the faculty are Rt. Rev. Abbot Aidan Williams, O.S.B., who is presently teaching at Regina Mundi, Institute of Sacred Studies for Sisters in Rome; Rev. Louis Conrad, O.S.B., former rector of St. Meinrad's seminary; Rev. Roger Schornbechler, O.S.B., former prior of St. John's abbey; Rev. Noel Mailloux, O.P., professor of psychology, University of Montreal; Rev. Eleutherius Winance, O.S.B., professor of philosophy at Sant' Anselmo, Rome; and Rev. Paschal Botz, O.S.B., professor of St. John's seminary, Collegeville.

The entire project was planned by the Benedictine Mothers superior, in response to the address made by our Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, who, at the meeting of the major superiors in Rome in 1952, urged superiors of communities to increase and improve the theological training of the members of their institutes.

The Institute will seek affiliation with Regina Mundi in Rome and with the Catholic University of America. The sessions are designed particularly for those Sisters charged with the spiritual formation of young religious.

"The Religious and the Spirituality of the Laity" was the topic of an address given by Sister M. Loyola, I.H.M., principal of Girls Catholic High School, Detroit. Sister spoke at the Study Week on the apostolate of the laity, an institute sponsored by the Department of Religion of the University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio, June 17-20.

The faculty of the Graduate Division of St. Mary's college, Xavier, Kansas, met in special session to draw up suggestions for the brochure on graduate programs in Catholic institutions, now being prepared by the NCEA Committee of Graduate Deans. The project is co-sponsored by the Sister Formation conference.

The Sister Formation Teachers of Greater St. Louis at their April 19 session decided on a 1958-59 program of five meetings, the first to be held Oct. 4. Topic for the first meeting will be "Spiritual, Personal, and Intellectual Qualities of Teachers of Sisters."

Panelists at the April meeting were Sister M. Theophane, F.C.S.P., Sister M. Joyce, O.S.F., Sister M. Celeste, R.S.M., and Sister M. Antoinette, S.L., all graduate students at St. Louis University. They

discussed the second volume of SFC proceedings and took part in a group session on the problems raised in the book.

Chairmen and recorders for the divisional discussions included Sister M. Rose, D.C., and Sister M. Illuminata, O.S.F. (English); Sister M. Cecile, D.C. and Sister Mary, S.L. (social science); Sister Francisca, S.L. and Sister M. Celested, R.S.M. (philosophy); Sister Florence, R.S.M. (science and mathematics); and Sister M. John, D.C. (education). An exchange of materials and sermons was considered by each group. The meeting was held at the provincialate of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

A recently published report evaluates the "Experimental Study of Mental Health Education," held at the College of St. Teresa, Winona, Minn., last year. The workshop was conducted by the Minnesota Association of Mental Health in cooperation with the College of St. Teresa and the Hamm Foundation. In the introductory address, Mother M. Alcuin, O.S.F., superior general, noted that "it is more than common for people to come to Sisters for advice, encouragement, help in distress, and they should find us mature, well-adjusted women — people willing to help, not just through intuition and good will, but also through . . . skill and training."

Theme of the Workshop was "The Teacher's Responsibility for a Healthy Personality." Three psychiatrists and a psychologist were on the staff.

The evaluation was designed partially to measure some changes of attitude developed in the participants. Problem cases suggested by the participating teachers were analyzed in the light of Workshop experience. The sessions were planned for the in-service growth of Sisters teaching in parochial schools.

Sister M. Emmanuel, dean of the College of St. Teresa, Winona, Minn., and member of the national SF committee, was the commencement speaker at the graduation exercises of St. Joseph's college, Hartford, Conn.

A Workshop in Adult Education at the Catholic University summer session will be under the direction of Sister Jerome, O.S.B., president of Donnelly college, Kansas City, Kans., and member of the national SF committee.

Mother M. Philothea, F.C.S.P., provincial superior, and SFC national chairman, gave the graduation address at commencement ceremonies held at College of Holy Names, Spokane, Wash.

CORRECTION

In the Spring issue of the *Bulletin*, the sentence beginning in column 1, page 7, and ending in the second column of the same page should read: "Therefore, the possible misjudgment that beauty of sound-offering is of prime consideration will in no case lead us to exclude anyone from her rightful place in sung worship."

On page 14, Sister M. Joan, O.S.F., should be identified as school supervisor of the Glen Riddle Franciscans of Portland.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND DOCUMENTATION

"His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, in his Encyclical on the Catholic priesthood, declared that a breath of the Holy Spirit was sweeping across the world and renewing the face of the earth. We can see this work of the Holy Spirit in the march of Catholic Action moving down the highways of the world. But there are other indications of a renaissance in Catholic spirit and Catholic life, and one of them is the Sister Formation Movement. It comes at a providential time because our Christian way of life is threatened by enemies from without and from within. Outside the Church there are men who do not believe in God and consequently do not recognize the dignity of man. They believe only in force and they are a danger to our Western civilization — even our survival has been placed in jeopardy.

-344- "The enemy from within has been described by His Holiness Pope Pius XII as ignorance of religion. He called it a 'devitalizing element — one which robs its victims of spiritual life.' As far back as the turn of the century St. Pius X has cried out against ignorance of religion and declared that it was caused by the negligent teaching of Christian Doctrine or the neglect of the duty altogether.

"In this hour of crisis the Holy Spirit has prompted our Supreme Pontiff to summon the Sisters who serve in the world rather than in the cloister to deepen the holiness of their lives, to broaden their intellectual training and to develop their professional preparation for the tasks ahead — teaching, nursing and social work. This is part of the answer of our Church to the challenge of our time. . . .

"The spiritual formation of our Sisters will come from the study of eternal truths, from vocal prayer, mental prayer, the liturgy, most especially from the Mass and the sacraments. In our day the active life is necessary but Sisters must be given time every day to walk with God in quiet contemplation.

"In addition to spiritual formation, the general intellectual training of Sisters should be encouraged, to enrich their personal lives and give them a relish for learning. They should be very familiar with the principles of the particular vocation to which they dedicate their lives, whether it be teaching, nursing or social work. But since all of life must be colored by the truths of religion, an adequate knowledge of theology, philosophy, and holy Scripture would be most helpful. I realize, of course, that all Sisters cannot be eminent as theologians, philosophers and scripture scholars, but some knowledge of these sacred sciences will enrich their personality, broaden the base of their scholarship and add tremendously to the sum total of their contribution to humanity.

"Finally the professional preparation of Sisters is vastly important. We owe this to the Sisters themselves, to the Church, and to society. Sisters have an advantage over lay people because their

lives are dedicated and consecrated. By their very way of life our Sisters have learned to see in the face of every child the image and likeness of God. . . . Yes, all Sisters understand that man is a creature of supreme dignity and surpassing destiny.

"But this is not enough. Piety of itself does not make a good teacher. But with adequate professional training the Sister should lead in her particular avocation. She should not only be equal to the laity but superior to them.

"All the delegates who have gathered here for this Southern Regional Sister Formation Conference are most welcome. We thank you for the distinguished service which you are giving to the Church and to society. We pray that God may bless your deliberations and assist you to achieve the high ideals of your consecrated lives."

Most Rev. Robert E. Lucey, archbishop of San Antonio, Address of Welcome to Sisters for Southern Regional Sister Formation Conference, Our Lady of the Lake College, Friday, Jan. 24, 1958.

"Religious women have, on the one hand, a great need to increase and round out their complete formation, to acquire a specialization so that they may exercise their specific apostolates more efficaciously, and to establish a certain balance between their profane and religious formation. They also need — and as a matter of fact ardently desire and receive — the protection and aid of the Holy See. For men, there are to be found a great number of ecclesiastical institutes; for women, up to the present, these have scarcely existed at all in the Church.

"It is among the ardent desires of the Sacred Congregation for Religious to arrange things in such a way that we may finally come to the creation of something like a University or central Institute of higher studies with a number of aggregated faculties or centers for Sisters. Such an arrangement would insure that Sisters would find, within the Church itself, all the elements of formation and technical preparation called for in our times; and this preparation would be such as would merit recognition on the part of civil authorities.

"It is now generally admitted that the novitiate and the religious profession do not suffice to prepare a person to conduct a school well, even an elementary one. The same holds true for hospital work, for which our times and the civil laws have laid down requirements, and this applies to other active works.

"In particular, Regina Mundi, a higher institute for the formation of religious in a scientific manner, has been set up in Rome and is now in its fourth year of existence and course work. It has four groups of professors for the four languages — English, French, Spanish, Italian. Several schools outside Rome are affiliated or aggregated to it in one way or another. . . .

"For scientific and technical formation there could easily be created a higher school for pedagogical and philosophical studies, for social sciences with an Institute for social workers annexed to it. . . . for classical and modern literatures, etc., etc.

"There is no doubt about the timeliness and usefulness of the Institutes already set up, or those just proposed.

"If all or most things towards this happy result come to pass, there will certainly follow the raising of the cultural level of Sisters to a much higher plane; an efficacy in their apostolate and general respect for them; and for the Church an increase in its authority and influence among all classes and sections of society."

Trans. from A. Gutiérrez, C.M.F., "Studia Canonica. Introductio in Constitutionem Apost. 'Sedes Sapientiae,'" *Commentarium pro Religiosis et Missionariis*, XXXVII (1958), 43-44.

"Doit-on dire la vérité aux malades?" *Cahiers Laennec*. Revue du centre de recherches et de déontologie médicales du mouvement international des intellectuels catholiques. No. 3 (Oct., 1957).

Hospital Sisters interested in the integration of related sciences bearing on questions in the profession of nursing will study this collection of essays with admiration. This volume asks if the sick should be told of their condition. The foreword rejects the simplistic answer, the answer based solely on authority, without regard to circumstances, and the answer that evades the binding principles. In the series, various specialists—a lawyer, a surgeon, a physician—examine the question regarded as a duty of justice on the human plane. Rev. P. J. Starck, S.J., professor of theology, Catholic University of Angers, then adds his analysis considering also man's duty of charity on the plane of faith. He notes that the principles are clear, but these do not dispense with the cardinal virtue of prudence, the judgment of the practical intellect in the concrete case. He even notes that the intuitions of poets help in keeping the situation from being purely impersonal and coldly objective. He then recalls the light thrown on the matter of death by the prayers of the liturgy, and he cites recent decisions of the Holy Father on related problems.

This collection of essays, centered on a single topic, should help hospital Sisters work out the kind of synthesis the writers of the Everett Report envisage, when they suggest what should be the integration among the sciences that the Sister in professional life needs. This integration can be demonstrated by the analysis of a single problem through the methodology of the several areas of knowledge that bear on it—in this case, ethics, psychology, medical science, the humanities, and theology. The integration is demonstrated in practice every time a Sister-nurse is faced with a concrete

situation where she must judge or act, not by technical knowledge alone, nor by faith or theological knowledge alone, but by an inter-relation of many habits.

This book might be well used as a demonstration lesson in meaningful integration and shown in contrast to efforts to fuse inferior sciences into higher ones.

Requests have reached the *Bulletin* office for editions of books for novitiate reading to carry out the Everett Report suggestion for the "tool use" of a modern foreign language. One of the purposes of the suggestion was to open up to Sisters the studies in spirituality now being produced by non-English writers. Some excellent books offered for practice in maintaining a reading knowledge of French are the following:

Les Confessions de Saint Augustin. Translated by G. Combès. Doctrinal Introduction by F. Cayré. (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1941). 492 pp. Paper, 990 fr. A detailed analytic index—345—is appended.

Les Apparitions racontées par Bernadette. Edited by René Lautentin. (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1958). 450 fr. There are 28 photos and some contemporary documents relating to the apparitions.

Mgr. Louis Soubigou. *La Croix au coeur de notre vie*. (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1958). 30 pp. Paper, 100 fr. These meditations on the Way of the Cross are a synthesis of texts from the Old and New Testament and from the Mass texts.

Address of the publisher of these books is P. Lethielleux, 10, Rue Cassette, Paris 6, France.

"Prayer is the most simple exercise of the theological virtues. . .

"Personal effort consists in keeping oneself in the presence of God by control of self, of sensibility, of imagination, memory, reason and its acts; this is followed, not by a letting up of this effort, but by an act of simple presence through faith and charity. There is something similar in scientific reason. This type of reflection does not give place to the reverie, but to a simple look which gathers up all the effort into an act of knowing.

"We can therefore say that prayer is in the highest sense methodical, just as the generative idea of a scientific construction or of a work of art can be said to be in the fullest measure rational or constructive; this latter, in its unity and simplicity, is the germ of the complex activity of reason or of the artist's technique, and in some way, its term. The insight or intuition is not in opposition to the work of reason, leaving this latter to itself, as a purely formal succession of meaningless operations. Rather

it draws it in . . . animates it, sustains it, and fills it with its own content. . . . On the other hand rational operations can help to distinguish an authentic from an illusory intuition. . . . The point is that the unity and continuity of the different acts of knowledge work out in a common insight into the object. . . .

"The same holds true for prayer, all due proportions observed. . . .

"Even if it frees itself from all method properly so-called, methodical prayer ought never to be mistaken for that wandering of the mind, that dreaming of our imagination, or that illusion of a subjective sensibility . . . that some can be tempted to confuse with prayer itself.

" . . . the Christian soul must purify itself with God's help. It purifies itself first of ignorance, in searching to know better, as He has revealed Himself, the one whom it wishes to love in charity. It purifies itself of all affection, either contrary to or simply foreign to charity. . . .

-346- "As a remedy to his indigence, the Christian should amass in the treasury of his memory — often by a prolonged labor — all that the Divine Loved One has seen fit, during this time of exile, to reveal to us of Himself."

Trans. from L. B. Geiger, O.P., "De L'Oraison et des Méthodes D'Oraison," *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique*, 31 (Octobre-Décembre, 1955), 337-363.

"One of Her Majesty's Inspectors once said at a public meeting: 'We look to our Convent Schools, not only because a sense of dedication is so marked a feature of them, but also because the Orders have, if not the actual means, the courage and trust in Divine Providence, to set themselves the highest standards in the qualification of their members. Convent Schools, by the nature of their firm spiritual basis, are potentially unsurpassable and unsurpassed. Academically, many of them rise head and shoulders above their contemporaries; all of them should!'"

"The Work of the English Convent Schools," by a Member of the Association of Convent Schools, *Catholic Education* (December, 1957), p. 53.

"Such maturity requires also that a Sister be well-balanced in her attitudes and habits. She will have to put first things first, and all things in their place in the routine of her life. It is Sertillanges again who says that 'study must first of all leave room for worship, prayer, direct meditation on the things of God. Study is itself a divine office, an indirect divine office; . . . but it must make way, at the right moment, for direct intercourse with Him. If we forget to do this, not only do we neglect a great duty, but the image of God in creation comes between us and Him.' She will have, also, a well-balanced attitude towards success, having a holy

ambition to become as good in her work as she possibly can. She will set her sights high because no low aspiration is worthy in God's service. She will have a well-balanced attitude towards health and recreation, knowing that minds can communicate their riches only through the body and that one of the greatest services she can give to her community is to keep mentally and physically fit. She will try to find the 'golden mean' in her habits of work, of prayer, of diversion; and this is a problem that can become, in our crowded horariums, a major problem in home economics as well as in distributive justice.

"For all this she will need as much as anything a sense of humor. One who does not have it as a natural endowment had better cultivate it. A sense of humor can check her up on her pettinesses, on her own little motives and schemes. It will help her to develop a large-mindedness, a certain magnanimity in her thinking and planning. She will begin to see herself as she is — a very small part of a grand and magnificent whole, the total Divine scheme of redemption. It will enlarge her vision so that she will think in terms of the universal. She will view her own work in the light of its part in the work of the congregation, of the land in which she lives, of the whole Mystical Body of Christ. She will seek to know and be guided by Christian principles of good citizenship, of social justice, of interracial and international relations. She will try to see the present moment in the light of eternity.

"Perhaps these qualities — maturity, balance, magnanimity — are all of a piece. Whatever they are, it seems to me that they are some of the most desirable outgrowths of the virtues of wisdom and prudence."

Sister Antonine, C.S.J., "The Ideal," *Educational Conference of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Proceedings and Papers of the Fifteenth Meeting*. St. Louis, 1957, pp. 38-39.

"We have reached a new phase in the history of the Church. . . . Every member is summoned to the apostolate. . . . The traditional and prevailing conception of the apostolate must be revised. . . .

" . . . Every one of us must be an apostle according to capacity. That can only come about if priests are helped by their immediate auxiliaries, that is by nuns, Brothers, members of secular institutes and all vowed to God, to stimulate the laity and organize them for apostolic work. . . .

"These are the views of the Rt. Rev. Léon-Joseph Suenens, auxiliary bishop of Malines, the largest diocese in the world. They are contained in his latest book [*The Gospel to Every Creature*] and they derive special importance and authority from the fact that they are strongly supported by no less a figure than the Archbishop of Malines, Most Reverend John Baptist Montini. In the preface he writes: 'The theme of this book is so important that it cannot leave unaffected anyone who has at heart a love of the Church.'

"... Today the help of nuns and Brothers is indispensable if the priest's own mission is to be successful. . . .

"It will be urged that for nuns to work amongst the laity will interfere with their spiritual exercises. The Bishop replies: 'Our duty as baptized Christians is as compelling for religious as for the laity and takes precedence of our professional duty. No one has the right to limit his obligations to the organizing of a hospital or school, and to confine his efforts to working for the success of his institution.' Particular work must be integrated with the general apostolate of the Church. Religious must not restrict their mental vision. All that is asked of them is a few hours each week given up to the organization of the laity.

"... Even the humblest lay Sister would see opening before her an opportunity for missionary action. This alone would work marvels of transformation. It could give fresh value to religious vocations in the eyes of the world. . . .

"Enough has been written here to show how right Archbishop Montini is when he writes: 'This is a disturbing and a courageous book. . . . With a clear vision and a vigorous style, the writer marshals all his arguments to one conclusion, namely, the necessity, the possibility of that energy, which, springing from love, can alone bring forth within the Church a new spirit of a missionary apostolate and thus save the world. This is a book to be read.'"

"Revolution," *The Catholic Gazette* (London, Jan., 1957), pp. 12-13.

Rt. Rev. Léon-Joseph Suenens. *The Gospel to Every Creature*. With a Preface by the Most Rev. John Baptist Montini. Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1957. Pp. 163. \$3.00.

Convinced that "this is, more than ever, the hour for a radiating, apostolic, missionary Christian faith," the distinguished Auxiliary Bishop of Malines brings a stirring missionary message to all Christians privileged to live in this our time. This very readable translation of *L'Eglise en état de mission*, made by Louise Gavan Duffy, brings to American readers a work which the Archbishop of Milan calls "the dramatic presentation of the Church Militant in contemporary history," with emphasis not on society's desertion of Christ but on the Church's endeavor to bring the world back to Him. Reviewed in its French original in an earlier issue of the *SF Bulletin* (December, 1955), the book well deserves the Archbishop's observation that it is "a disturbing and a courageous book" but also an optimistic one.

Here is the kind of disturbance we need to keep us eager about the coming of Christ's kingdom. Bishop Suenens neither minimizes the secular duty on the pretext that it is not directly religious nor exaggerates it by requiring the work of humanization to precede the preaching of the Gospel. In the

contrasting lights of recent Communistic advances and traditional Catholic teaching, he underscores the need for a direct apostolate, the meeting of individual with individual. The chapters on the priestly apostolate and the lay apostolate and on the apostolic role of those helping the clergy, especially religious, offer suggestions much in line with what we have been hearing lately about the need for a wiser division of labor and better direction of Catholic Action leaders. The Bishop remarks, for example, on the lethargy and thoughtlessness of our "good people," suggesting a desirable revision of our educational system, starting with the catechism:

This call to the apostolate must be driven home as an elementary requirement from the very first chapter which asks: "Why was man created?" and answers: "To know, love, and serve God." It is a perfectly correct answer, but only if we do not limit ourselves to the individual outlook and if we understand rightly the word "serve." For to serve God means to make Him known, to make Him loved, to cause Him to be served. The two duties — the personal and the missionary duty — are bound together and depend upon one another.

And again:

Everything is to be gained from planning our programmes of study (for future priests and, by analogy, for religious) with special relation to social psychology in all its ramifications, from making a direct study of the human repercussions of the great religious duties, from opening a window on the social problems which absorb men and affect their happiness here and hereafter. The studies of a future priest should have two centres of powerful interest for him: God and the man of flesh and blood that he sees before him, knowing God in His relations with men and man in his relations with God.

Readers of the *Everett Curriculum Report* on Sister Formation should find such emphasis familiar.

Communities considering a change in their horarium might well find inspiration from the Bishop's words on the subject:

The question of time, that is, of its rational use and arrangement, is dependent on faith, which puts first things first, in accordance with its own scale of values. The principal test is the apostolic output that is secured. This is not primarily a question of quantity, but one of right outlook, of perspective. A few hours a week may be sufficient to give a new orientation to all one's ordinary activities. Once the relative importance of different works is established, practical conclusions will follow naturally. . . .

There is no doubt that our nuns are often seriously overworked, but it would be well to make sure that they are not wrongly overworked, to consider whether a better understanding of missionary duty would not suggest certain modifications in their programme. Is it not likely that nuns will always be overworked? Is that not what one would expect of devoted and generous souls? The main question is to know how they are overworked. Exhaustion may come from the thousand calls of daily life, imagined by ourselves as being indispensable, just as it may be due to the effort of building up an apostolic group among souls that have as yet little generosity. What matters most is to know which fatigue will be more useful to the Church.

Although the chapters on the need of a direct training for the apostolate and the plan for a direct initiation into the apostolate were written before

Sedes Sapientiae, they are singularly in line with the spirit and directives of the Holy See. The last chapter, the missionary command of the Lord, adequately summarizes this zealous little work that should do much to help cast abroad the Lord's fire of apostolic charity.

A number of communities, as they study their early history, are becoming more fully aware of how thoroughly a program of Sister Formation is a part of their original traditions. The following quotation is a case in point. The text is from the Constitutions of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, 1896:

The Scholasticate: As the chief object of the novitiate in all religious Orders is to form subjects to Christian perfection and Community life; so the primary end of the scholasticate is to train young Sisters for the different employments for which they appear best fitted; whether it be for the art of teaching, caring for the sick, or for the manifold branches of housework either in industrial schools or in other establishments of the Congregation.

The scholasticate may be considered an extension of the novitiate, to try and perfect the aptitude of the novices, thus securing efficiency in each of the ends embraced by the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross.

For those intended for the education of youth, it consists in spending one year at least under the immediate tuition of the ablest teachers in the community, receiving instructions from them for two or three hours each day, and teaching or attending classes in the Academy during the remainder of the time; the object being, as must appear obvious, to make of them thorough teachers before they are sent on mission. The carrying out of this measure, may, for a time, prevent the opening of some establishment, but it will, without doubt, result in increasing the efficiency of the Congregation, as a teaching body.

Great importance should be attached to this Rule, and it should not be departed from. Experience teaches that yielding too easily to entreaties for new establishments throughout the land, has hitherto prevented religious teaching Orders from coping successfully with the public schools supported by the State.

The Sisters of the Holy Cross make a great mistake if they expect to obtain otherwise that excellence, which by right belongs to the Church. To deprive our sacred cause of that precious superiority when it is in our power, would be an inexcusable negligence. Hence it is incumbent on the members of the Chapter to secure, for the Sisters destined to teach, (in a scholasticate properly conducted) the opportunities necessary for the acquisition, as far as their respective abilities permit, of a superior education so indispensable in our day; and where they will be made familiar with the art of teaching, as well as with the method in use in the Congregation.

Before leaving the scholasticate, the Sisters shall be examined in presence of the General Council, and other Mistresses chosen by the General Council, who shall take note of their acquirements, not alone as to what they have studied or learned, but especially as to the method of teaching what they know. The scholasticate ordinarily lasts three years, but the Mother General with her Council may abridge the time according to the aptitude of the religious or the knowledge acquired by them before entering the Community. As to the Sisters destined for hospitals, orphan asylums, industrial schools, and the various

industries which lie open to the usefulness of a large number of subjects, even in a Congregation devoted to teaching, it becomes the duty of the administration to prepare them, before profession, to excel in the work or employment to which they are destined.

"Presenting statistics on the small number of doctorate degrees in philosophy granted by colleges and universities, he [Archbishop John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., Philadelphia] said that 'we need look no further for the decay of initiative in our public life, both national and international.'

"Most of the secular institutions of higher learning in the United States threw philosophy overboard some 30 years ago,' he continued.

"Some of them have smuggled it back aboard since then, but seldom is it paid more than lip service. On the other hand, philosophy has remained the core of the Catholic college curriculum, which shares with religion the task of directing the life of the Catholic who is preparing to be a good citizen of this world and of the world to come.' "

N.C.W.C. News Service, Philadelphia, March 4, 1958.

"It will be sufficient for us to recall that, while preserving the differences that now exist and must continue to exist among communities, a sincere and benevolent effort toward union and collaboration must be made. There is, in fact, a kind of 'common welfare' of communities, which supposes that each one is ready to take others into account and to adapt itself to the requirements of a coordination that necessarily implies also some renunciation in view of the general welfare.

"The principle St. Paul expounds in the well-known passage of the first Epistle to the Corinthians (I Cor. 12: 12-27) concerning the relations of members among themselves, also holds true by analogy for your communities, which are united by divine grace in the Body of the Church. Each member of the Body is entitled to receive the help of the collaboration of all with a view to the one and only common welfare, that of the Holy Church.

"It is easy to deduce from this sentiments of esteem, benevolence, courtesy, the will to collaborate, holy emulation and magnanimous disinterestedness that will preside over the relations of communities among themselves.

"Each member must assuredly value his own nature and his own function within the Body, but he must also understand and respect the function of others and know how to harmonize with others for the greatest common welfare."

Pius XII, Address to the second General Congress of the States of Perfection in Rome, Dec. 12, 1957, from *The Catholic Messenger*, Jan. 30, 1958, p. 7.

"If we grant the capacity of the adult for a unique, serious deepening of his understanding of life and of his world, what ideally should be offered by educators to him for this purpose?

"1. Lecturers and discussion leaders with a profound respect for intelligence, who have themselves understood what is significant in the subject they teach, and how their subject is related to the 'why' of human life. Professors who have not stopped learning themselves, who will prepare a new course each year they speak, who will supply no routine notes and refer to no set of concepts in a text-book with their lectures as peripheral; people teaching who can witness to the fact that there is a certain content in a subject which must be mastered before enlightenment comes, but that understanding of this mass of material is possible with curiosity and effort.

"2. Literature courses where the adult comes sharply and directly to face the important problems of his own life — not obliquely as one does in experience with one's family and friends. It seems to me it is in drama and fiction that the adult begins to discriminate about what is conditioned in his own experience, what is intersubjective, how communication between honest and tolerant grown-ups might be possible, that each new learning between people need not be the fruit of suffering.

"3. Philosophy courses, limited in demands on memory, rigorous in the use of intellectual honesty and curiosity, demanding more of the student than he or some critics imagine possible. No quarter for sloppiness and none for pattness of answer. Never to give the answer without first posing the question.

"4. Theology which will enrich understanding — which will give not pat answers for questions someone else may someday demand a phrase for. But lectures which will bring one closer to an understanding of the vocation of a Christian and the meaning of salvation and the love of God. Series on the New Testament, the Old Testament, on prayer, on the problem of suffering, and on the search for God in different times.

"5. Science courses which will not be 'popular' in the sense that things are so over-simplified that one believes in physicists with a kind of faith, and understands physics not at all. . . . A course where with some real effort to understand, the dimensions of present theory, and its limitations, can be seen, whether or not it could be satisfactorily given back in detail. And for this, enough mathematics to know where it is being used in modern scientific and philosophic thinking.

"6. Some aspect of history to demonstrate how a historian selects the relevant in the experience of the past.

"7. Enough contact with ancient stories and philosophies and human aspirations so that a man of this generation need not live in isolation with his own problems and his own outlook.

"8. Some modern psychology so that an adult today does not live in isolation outside his own time and its problems.

"9. An opportunity to meet another modern culture on its own terms — in its own language and by its literature directly.

"10. An opportunity to write precisely and well in his own language.

"11. An introduction to achievements in unity and beauty so that he may begin to know about wonder — for we have been more influenced by a puritan respect for work and utility than we are aware."

Charlotte Tansey, "The Assumptions of Adult Learning," *Culture*, XVIII (December, 1957), 417-419.

Rev. Cornelius Cuyler, S.S. (ed.) *Curriculum of the Minor Seminary: Natural Sciences and Modern Languages*. (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America, 1958). 87-349—pp. \$1.75.

Sisters will view this report sympathetically because of their interest in curriculum planning and in the *Everett Report*. The present report, like that of Everett, set about to present curriculum within the realistic framework of a limited time allotment. The writers bear in mind that a special class of people were being educated, in this case future priests.

In languages the writers adopt a clear-cut limitation of objective to "the ability to read the language with some fluency," cutting out all singing of songs or elaborate investigating of the mores of the people who speak the language. On this definite foundation other values arise — cultural insights in literature, drama and music and helps to vocabulary enrichment.

In biology speakers selected as objectives: (1) to give a proper attitude of mind towards science; (2) to give the future priest a knowledge of science equal to that of his educated lay contemporary, in accordance with the directive of Pius XII; and (3) to give the course a carry-over value helpful to the student when he becomes a priest (even in so simple a way as giving him a wholesome love of the out-of-doors).

The volume states: "There is no need for theologizing. We avoided it in order that the student may not get the idea that there is such a thing as Catholic science. We believe that, if we give the student a straight, top-notch, up-to-the-minute science course, as good as the best, the atom, the cell, the heart, the nerve, and the hormone will preach the sermon." At one point in the course, however — the treatment of human life — some philosophy, theology, and asceticism are worked in of set purpose. The over-all purpose of the course is to help the seminarian become aware of what science is doing in the modern

world and to be able to distinguish between hypothesis and fact.

Dom Aelred Graham. *Christian Thought and Action. The Role of Catholicism in Our Time.* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1957). 242 pp. \$5.00.

These essays, intended for general and popular reading, take the balanced view of the Christian life suggested by this thought: "The proclamation of high doctrinal truths, the propounding of unimpeachable moral principles at the level of the theological stratosphere, the reminder that man is born to suffering and must look for release hereafter, have about them an air of unreality, as Communists never tire of pointing out, unless they are linked with a concrete demonstration of how truth and righteousness find their embodiment in the living texture of any given human situation." Many of these essays first appeared in distinguished English and American journals. Three concluding meditations aim to help us live with the paradox "of being detached from the world while identifying ourselves with all that is of value in it."

Of interest to those concerned with Sisters' studies are these remarks: "Experience shows, too, that a mind eager to be informed about the deeper truths of the Faith seldom goes together with moral flabbiness. As might have been expected, the greater the capacity for genuine thought — and there is evidence to show that it is not as rare among the young as it is sometimes supposed — the more is it accompanied by teachableness and intellectual humility."

STUDIES DURING THE CANONICAL NOVITIATE

Rev. Basil Frison, C.M.F.
(reprint from *The Jurist*, continued)

Before one enters into the exegesis of paragraph 3 of canon 565, it will help to remember a basic principle of interpretation. Canonists are unanimously agreed as to the substance of the theory of interpretation which defends that the law is what the legislator wished, namely the law is the will of the legislator and not the will of the law considered as an independent entity standing by itself and even growing and expanding aside from the will of the legislator.³⁸ This is called the subjective theory of law. Although there is a variety of opinions as to the criteria to be followed in the subjective theory of law, it is generally accepted in Canon Law circles that in the exegesis of canonical norms, the text or verbal formula has priority over the reasons for the law.³⁹ This explains the strong loyalty of interpreters to the letter of the canons, until another factor or criterion of interpretation recommends a departure from the obvious literal meaning of the text and the context.

The minimum requirements of the norm stated in paragraph 3 of canon 565 is that the canonical

38. Cf. Cabreros, *Investigación Subjetiva y Objetiva de la Ley en Investigación y elaboración del Derecho Canónico*, Barcelona, 1956, p. 215.

39. Cf. canon 18.

year of novitiate shall not be a time of academic pursuits. The idea is not new in the Church. As far back as the fourteenth century one finds a Roman pontiff stating his opinion and making it a law: "They shall not apply themselves to scholastic studies during the time of novitiate or probation."⁴⁰ During the pontificate of Pius IX the Vatican Council clearly instructed the competent superiors about the care and training of novices and prescribed that they should not be employed in studies. "Since the training of novices is directed to the laying of the foundations of their spiritual life, they shall not dedicate themselves during the year of novitiate to study except the constitutions and spiritual books most apt and useful in the judgment of the master, adding also some reading and explanation of the Roman catechism."⁴¹

It is the common opinion of canonists that some study is permitted and useful in the canonical year of novitiate. Although Regatillo⁴² and Romani⁴³ seem to maintain that no studies whatsoever may be permitted in the novitiate, it must be presumed that their text, "no formal course of studies" and "no other studies" respectively, and context is too brief to know what they believe to be the interpretation of the law. Oesterle,⁴⁴ however, leaves no room for doubts about his interpretation of the law. He briefly says that novices may not follow any course of philosophy, theology, etc.; if there be any need to do so, a dispensation should first be obtained. In passing it could be mentioned that whenever a dispensation from canon 565, § 3 is needed, no authority except the Holy See itself can dispense from this law.⁴⁵

The more strict interpretation of the law given by the above mentioned canonists should not be considered to be in conflict with the common opinion of canonists who have studied this canon more in detail.

Larraona⁴⁶ gives an excellent explanation of the canon. Practically all the canonists who have written on this matter agree with him. He states that canon 565, § 3 forbids, a) regular and methodical academic courses directed by a teacher, and b) prolonged private study of literature, science and arts for the purpose of advancing in their knowledge. The content of the three subjects mentioned is rather broad. Literature includes languages, the reading of the classics, cultivation of literary style, and the like. Science refers not only to physical and natural sciences, but also to philosophy, jurisprudence, moral and dogmatic theology, and other similar subjects. Arts means the study, even in a broad sense, of skills and appreciation in conformity with aesthetic

40. Apostolic Constitution *Redemptor Noster* of Benedict XII, dated November 28, 1336, addressed to the Order of Friars Minor, in *Enchiridion*, p. 42.

41. Vatican Council, *Schemata Constitutionum de Regularibus*, n. 6, ch. V, in *Enchiridion*, p. 202.

42. *Institutiones Iuris Canonici*, (ed. 4, Santander, 1951), I, 483.

43. *Institutiones Iuris Canonici*, (Rome, 1941), I, 367.

44. *Praelectiones Iuris Canonici*, Manuscripti Instar, Rome, 1931, I, ad c. 565, §3.

45. Creusen, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

46. *CpR.*, XXIV (1943) 214-215.

principles; it does not include a merely mechanical exercise.⁴⁷

The law is negative in form, yet, it is the common opinion that it allows some study.⁴⁸ There is a variety of opinions regarding what is permitted in the novitiate concerning studies. Some writers are preoccupied with making it clear that any study in the novitiate has to be something secondary in the life of novices.⁴⁹ This is evidently the minimum requirement of the law regarding the amount of studies permitted in the novitiate. As Creusen says: "Even independently of the express law of the Church (c. 565, § 3) there are two good reasons for such course of action: the strict right of the aspirants to receive a solid formation in the religious life; and secondly, the good of the institute, which requires in its members solid virtue and a true interior spirit."⁵⁰ If a course of studies is likely to interfere with the success of the year of novitiate, that course should be discarded, not necessarily because of the norm given in § 3, but because of the precepts of § 1 of canon 565.

Today's more pressing need of an intellectual and academic formation for Sisters cannot be allowed to impede in the least what is basic and paramount in the life of the evangelical counsels. The expansion of the facilities for technical training should never be permitted to detract from the time, effort and other requirements that belong in a well organized program of spiritual training on the novitiate level. No school will allow students to carry an academic load beyond certain reasonable bounds. Any combination of academic and spiritual duties on the novitiate level which clash and interfere with the main purpose of the year of novitiate, as understood by the Church, is forbidden. If Sisters are to be solidly grounded in the principles of the spiritual life, one wonders when it takes place. Of late there seems to be a greater demand that retreat masters explain the fundamentals of the spiritual life. One might wonder how little Sisters are taught about the spiritual life in the novitiate. It is evident that even the most spiritually intense year of novitiate, one which is a hundred per cent successful for both the individual and the institute, will produce very limited results and will only be the beginning of a life of striving after perfection, not only as to holiness or the habit of charity, but also as to the intellectual maturity that it presupposes. No part of the job which the Church wishes to be accomplished during the year of novitiate can be relegated to a later time. Some women religious, and men too, only after long years, if at all, find out just what religious life is all about. This need not be so.

47. Larraona, *ibid.*, p. 215.

48. Cf. Creusen, *op. cit.*, p. 152; Lenzetti, *Acta et Documenta Congressus*, III, 108; Vermeersch, *Epitome*, (1933) I, 509; Wernz-Vidal, *op. cit.*, p. 244; Tabera, *Derecho de los Religiosos*, ed. 2, Madrid, 1952) p. 302; Abbo-Hannan, *op. cit.*, I, 582; Beste, *Introducción a Codicem*, (ed. 2, Collegeville, 1944), p. 377; Choupin, *Nature et Obligations de l'Etat Religieux*, (Paris, 1923), p. 279; Prummer, *Manuale Iuris Canonici*, (Freiburg, 1927), p. 281; Chelodi, *Ius Canonicum de Personis*, (ed. 3, Trent, 1942), p. 423, note 2; Coronata, *Institutiones Iuris Canonici*, (ed. 2, Rome, 1939), I, 730, note 6.

49. Wernz-Vidal, *op. cit.*, p. 244; Tabera, *op. cit.*, p. 302; Vermeersch, *op. cit.*, p. 508.

50. *Op. cit.*, p. 152.

Study and Spiritual Life

A certain amount of study is useful and perhaps necessary to help make the year of novitiate spiritually successful.⁵¹ Variety is needed to sustain the effort without a lapse into the boredom or irritation caused by monotony.⁵² As a rule novices need somewhat long periods of relaxation every week. Besides sufficiently long physical exercise adapted to the age and temperament of the novices, Gregorian chant, modern music, liturgical instruction, and the reading of good books is strongly recommended by Lenzetti.⁵³

Ellis states that the reasons for allowing any study at all in the novitiate are to help the novices retain the knowledge they have already acquired, and to add a certain amount of pleasant variety to the regular order of spiritual duties and exercises, thus helping them to avoid any overstraining of the nervous system which may result in physical or mental exhaustion, and may manifest itself in scruples or melancholia.⁵⁴

Study can be a relaxing or a taxing occupation. When novices find even a limited time of study too taxing it might be a symptom of some academic deficiency which occurred before the novitiate. It is possible that candidates for the religious life lack, when they start the novitiate, a proper habit of study; they might lack interest in the pursuit of academic goals. One who is of age to enter the novitiate and who aspires to a career should be able to find a certain amount of study relaxing from the intense spiritual program of the novitiate. Furthermore, novices who are going to pursue an intense and more or less long course of studies after their first profession need a good habit of study. It does not seem to ask too much to require that novices pass to the house of studies with more than a fair amount of good will to try. However, the writer disagrees in principle with the opinion that studies in the novitiate are justified in order that the superiors may have an opportunity of testing the talent of the novices, in the sense of academic ability.⁵⁵ It is true that several documents from the Holy See indicate that the novitiate can serve the purpose of knowing the candidate better.⁵⁶ The writer's objection is raised mainly against making the novitiate a kind of academic test. In the case of a novice aspiring to the priesthood it would seem a very incongruous situation were he to be denied admission to his first profession on the grounds of lack of intellectual capacity. The novitiate made as a cleric is not valid for another class; and besides a cleric novice is not expected to apply himself of set purpose to studies; his main goal must be spiritual religious formation. However, as assumed in the

51. Cf. Lenzetti, *op. cit.*, p. 108; Beste, *op. cit.*, p. 377.

52. Creusen, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

53. *Op. cit.*, p. 108.

54. *Studies during the Novitiate in Review for Religious*, II (1943), 262.

55. Cf. Abbo-Hannan, *op. cit.*, I, 582.

56. Cf. *Decretum Ad explorandum in Enchiridion*, p. 283.

case, he is deemed unworthy of admission only because he is not successful in his studies during the canonical year of novitiate. Such an attitude on the part of the superiors would be contrary to the mind of the Church. The school record submitted before admission to the novitiate should settle the matter of the novice's intellectual qualities until the first profession is made and the young religious applies himself to full-time studies. This doctrine applies generally to Sisters, also. On the other hand, the studies permitted during the year of novitiate could and should enable the superiors to know the candidates better. In this sense the novitiate can indeed offer an opportunity to test the talents of the novices.

-352- On the feast of St. Joseph, March 19, 1924, Pius XI issued an apostolic letter, *Unigenitus Dei Filius*⁵⁷ addressed to every superior general of institutes of men religious. The document is mainly concerned with the formation of their members in a higher culture. Speaking of the year of novitiate, the Holy Father says that the candidates "shall learn, of set purpose, the fundamentals and the virtues of the religious life; . . . therefore, putting aside the study of any subject matter and any pastime, the novices, under the wise guidance of their master, shall apply themselves only to the practice of the interior life and to the acquisition of virtues especially those related and connected with the religious vows, namely of poverty, chastity and obedience."

Coronata,⁵⁸ Schaefer,⁵⁹ and Wernz-Vidal⁶⁰ take notice of Pope Pius XI's apostolic letter. Wernz-Vidal seem to prefer an interpretation of canon 565, § 3, which is entirely in agreement with the letter of the papal document. Therefore, according to them, all directed studies are forbidden in the novitiate. Coronata and Schaefer believe that Pius XI's letter can be interpreted to allow some academic activities. Most canonists omit to mention Pius XI's *Unigenitus Dei Filius* when commenting on canon 565. The reason for the omission may be that the apostolic letter does not change the law nor explain it; it is an emphatic re-statement of doctrine commonly accepted. Pope Pius XI brilliantly summed up in a few words the basic norms on the novitiate stated in various parts of the Code of Canon Law.

A literal interpretation of paragraph 3 of canon 565 throws little light upon what the Church considers a legitimate practical positive norm about studies during the year of novitiate. The canon is negative, and its interpretation hinges around the meaning of *dedita opera* (of set purpose). The variety of opinions on this point justifies what the Everett Report says: "Interpretations vary widely." Yet the differences of opinion are not as great as it might seem. One may venture to say that they are more apparent than real.

The Decree *Ad Explorandum*

Canonists are practically agreed on the following points:

57. *Enchiridion*, pp. 400-413.

58. *Op. cit.*, p. 730, note 6.

59. *Op. cit.*, p. 539.

60. *Op. cit.*, p. 244, note 35.

(a) Some study during the year of novitiate is useful, advisable and in keeping with the norms of the Code of Canon Law;

(b) Study should never be permitted to interfere with the primary purpose of the year of novitiate (canon 565, § 1);

(c) The Code offers no positive norm about the subject matter or manner of studies in the novitiate;

(d) Pre-Code laws, especially the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Religious *Ad Explorandum*, August 27, 1910 (*Fontes*, VI, 4405), were abrogated by the Code of Canon Law;

(e) The decree *Ad Explorandum* is a safe interpretation of canon 565, § 3.

(a), (b) and (c) have already been explained above. It remains to discuss the contents and the validity of the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Religious.

Most canonists expressly recognize the existence and importance of this decree in the matter of studies in the canonical novitiate.⁶¹

The first paragraph of the decree emphasizes the fact that the canonical year of novitiate is established for the purpose of searching one's soul and educating it gradually in the ways of religious perfection. "Therefore, the year of novitiate is to be totally dedicated to spiritual practices."

The decree, which appeared prior to the Code of Canon Law, is in perfect agreement with the canons in establishing the total object of the year of probation. This statement is important and should allay all the apprehensions of canonists who might be inclined to see a conflict between the norms of this decree and those of canon 565. At the time of the codification there was a relatively strong opposition on the part of some canonists to the decree. They wanted to have it revoked and not to include it in the footnotes. Yet, in spite of the opposition the decree is mentioned as a source for paragraph three, and has been up to the present considered by the Sacred Congregation of Religious as a safe practical criterion in the application of the canonical norms on studies in the novitiate. The statutes appended to the Constitution *Sedes Sapientiae* (art. 36) once again mention the decree *Ad Explorandum* as a safe practical norm to be followed regarding studies in the canonical year of novitiate.

Returning to the text of the decree, one finds next that the document reports on the findings of experience, namely that the continuous practice of spiritual exercises, even when opportune variations are introduced, tires the mind especially of young people, and, as a consequence, they quite often approach those exercises with a fatigued mind and a less attentive will. Furthermore, a certain amount of directed studies during the year of novitiate can

61. Cf. Frummer, *op. cit.*, p. 281; Choupin, *op. cit.*, p. 279; Vermeersch, *op. cit.*, p. 509; Tabera, *op. cit.*, p. 302, note 55; Chelodl, *op. cit.*, p. 423, note 2; Creusen, *op. cit.*, p. 152; Larraona, *op. cit.*, p. 215; Beste, *op. cit.*, p. 377, note 17; Schaefer, *op. cit.*, p. 539.

well serve to avoid forgetting what was previously learned and besides to prove one's intellectual capacity, aptitude and diligence.

The practical norms of the decree, which were of a mandatory nature, may be stated briefly as follows:

1. Novices shall devote one hour a day to private study, except on feast days;

2. It is best to have competent teachers in charge of the studies. They shall lecture for an hour, or at least check the progress made in the subjects assigned, but no more than three times a week. This is over and above the daily hour of private study;

3. Although the novitiate is not an (academic) school in the true sense of the word, the lectures and private study mentioned above, should not be held just as a practice of mortification. The novices shall apply themselves diligently and shall seek a corresponding improvement. Teachers shall follow the proper method, shall try to find out the ability and application of the novices, and shall see to it that they make progress. The kind of studies to be pursued depends on the nature of the institute. The vernacular for all, and Latin and Greek for those aspiring to sacred orders are recommended, besides some practice of composition and recitation.

It is the common opinion today that the decree no longer binds.⁶² As Choupin writes⁶³ canon 565 does not incorporate to the Code of Canon Law the prescriptions of the decree *Ad Explorandum*. Yet it is legitimate and perfectly safe to interpret canon 565, § 3, according to the norms of the decree.⁶⁴ The norms of the decree may well serve as a guide for superiors when formulating the time table for the novitiate.⁶⁵ The decree is an excellent directive norm.⁶⁶ The excellent reasons for the decree *Ad Explorandum* exist also at present, and therefore superiors should feel that they must organize the program for their novitiate in keeping with the mind and spirit of the decree.⁶⁷

Among the outstanding canonists who do not seem to endorse the opinions of the authors just quoted must be mentioned Schaefer and Coronata. However, these two well known canonists suggest as a practical norm precisely what the decree had commanded in the year 1910. Therefore, even if in theory they refuse to accept the decree as a guide for the interpretation of canon 565, § 3, in practice they follow it.

Some canonists will limit the studies allowed during the year of novitiate to review only.⁶⁸ It

would seem, however, that such restriction is not justified. The purpose of review is not to forget. Now, although the effort needed not to forget is lesser than the effort needed to learn new things, it is evident that the study of more advanced material is a successful means both to review and help remember and to make new progress. As a matter of fact review implies having forgotten something or not having understood it right. Review of things known can be extremely boring and very little conducive to the very purpose of studying, whether it be in the novitiate or outside the novitiate. Goyeneche⁶⁹ gives the more liberal interpretation about this point. He is of the opinion that new subject matter can be studied, although no formal course should be had. Regarding new matter, Regatillo⁷⁰ allows only "*leviora discere*" (to learn the less important or easier things).

Canonists who attempt to give a norm about the subject matter to be studied in the novitiate must of necessity suppose that it is not a simple matter of review; or else there is no point in trying to choose the subject. This view adopted by the writer seems to find support in the *Statutes*. After stating that classes in the novitiate itself are not forbidden, the statutes add: "Nevertheless, these are not to be computed in the school year."⁷¹ This exception can be understood only if studies are not limited to review. A course of studies which consists exclusively in the review of matter previously studied is generally given no academic recognition; it might be called a remedial course, but constitutes a duplication which no program of studies is wont to consider as part of a school year.

At first sight the prescriptions of canon 565, § 3, appear to be much more strict and restricting than the norms of the decree *Ad Explorandum*. But by interpreting the canon in the light of the decree one achieves an equitable norm. Equity as an aid to interpretation can be a right use or an abuse. It is an abuse, which cannot be tolerated, when equity is used to replace an existing law which happens possibly to be less perfect or somewhat difficult to observe because of the consequences. The right use of equity limits itself to avoiding the evident harm that would follow from the strict demands of logical reasoning in the interpretation of the law.⁷² Concerning the interpretation of canon 565, canonists find the equitable norm by retaining the existing law in all its vigor as contained in paragraph 1, making the purpose of the year of novitiate a total and engaging goal, eliminating all obstacles, as directed in paragraph 3, yet maintaining a well-balanced spiritual and intellectual diet for the young novices.

Practical Norm

Canonists have used slightly different formulas to state what they think is the practical norm as contained in the Code of Canon Law. All the formulas may be grouped as follows:

62. Cf. Larraona, *CpR.*, *ibid.*, p. 215.

63. *Op. cit.*, p. 279.

64. Larraona, *Ibid.*, p. 215.

65. Choupin, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

66. Prummer, *op. cit.*, p. 281; Tabera, *op. cit.*, p. 302, note 55; Chelodi, *op. cit.*, p. 423, note 2.

67. Vermeersch, *op. cit.*, p. 509; Creusen, *op. cit.*, p. 152; De Carlo, *Ius Religiosorum*, (Tournai, 1950), p. 214.

68. Cf. Tabera, *op. cit.*, p. 302; Abbo-Hannan, *op. cit.*, p. 582.

69. *Iuris Canonici Summa Principia*, Pars II, De Religiosis, (Rome, 1938), p. 103.

70. *Op. cit.*, p. 483.

71. Art. 36, § 1, n. 2.

72. Cf. Bender, *Logica et Legis interpretas*, in *Investigacion*, p. 274.

Beste⁷³ and Abbo-Hannan⁷⁴ allow one hour a day of study on week days; they are not clear as to whether it is private study only or classes conducted by a professor.

Coronata,⁷⁵ Schaefer⁷⁶ and Jone⁷⁷ allow three or four hours a week of lectures or classes conducted by a professor.

Creusen⁷⁸ allows one hour a day of instruction. The term "instruction" seems to indicate a class conducted by a professor.

Choupin⁷⁹ is rather vague, for he allows a "certain amount of time of study."

Lenzetti⁸⁰ permits three or four hours a week of study. He says nothing about the study being under the guidance of a teacher.

Ellis⁸¹ says that "in place of three periods of sixty minutes each, it may be found more convenient to have four class periods per week of forty-five minutes each."

-354- Tabera⁸² allows an hour a day of private study and some few classes a week:

Larraona⁸³ allows:

- (a) some private study with moderation,
- (b) some few lectures a week,
- (c) a limited practice of art or skills provided it does not interfere with the exercises of the novitiate.

The writer chooses as the most acceptable practical norm a combination of Tabera's and Larraona's formula:

An hour a day of private study on week days;

Five or six lectures a week by a competent professor.

This norm extends the number of lectures prescribed by the decree *Ad Explorandum* in keeping with the present mind of the Sacred Congregation of Religious. According to the *Statutes*, "... there is no prohibition of ... brief, even daily, classes in the novitiate itself."⁸⁴

Some vocal or instrumental music practice in common two or three times a week has been found

very practical in the past.⁸⁵ It serves for relaxation and adds to the solemnity of the liturgical services. Some private instrumental music practice, painting or clay modeling, and the like are permitted according to the prudent judgment of the master of novices, provided these do not interfere with the common practices of the novitiate.

The length of time that can be dedicated expressly to the study of literature, science or humanities does not seem to have been measured exactly by the law. Therefore, it remains subject to the prudent judgment of the superiors responsible for the schedule of the novices. Question 175 of *The List of Questions* implies the existence of some norms given by the Sacred Congregation, but that information does not seem to be public. The question reads in part: "... did they (the novices) apply themselves expressly to the study of literature, science or humanities (c. 565, § 3) beyond the limited measure in which this has been approved by the Sacred Congregation?" The writer has no specific information on this point; but, according to a reliable source, the norms are more or less those of the decree *Ad Explorandum*.

Regarding the subject matter of the academic studies permitted within "limited measure" nothing was said in the *Normae* of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars of June 28, 1901. According to several canonists⁸⁶ only the following subjects were permitted: one's native tongue and Latin in institutes that use this language in the classroom or choir. Abbo-Hannan⁸⁷ and Beste⁸⁸ very properly consider the advisability of pursuing also other studies, "depending on the nature of the institute," such as theoretical nursing, for instance. Lenzetti⁸⁹ mentions music and liturgy. Tabera⁹⁰ seems to allow only the review of studies completed previously. Larraona⁹¹ speaks of review and further development of studies taken up in high school. Choupin⁹² allows "studies which will help the novices to better respond to their vocation and to discharge successfully the offices or work to which the institute is dedicated." The *Statutes* mention Sacred Liturgy, not as a selective, but as a compulsory subject for study during the year of novitiate: "In the novitiate ... they are to learn the Sacred Liturgy and live by it" (Art. 37, #1).

(to be continued)

85. Cf. *Review for Religious*, VII (1948), 271.

86. Creusen, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

87. *Ibid.*

88. *Ibid.*

89. *Ibid.*

90. *Ibid.*

91. *Ibid.*

92. *Ibid.*

73. *Op. cit.*, p. 377.

74. *Op. cit.*, p. 582.

75. *Op. cit.*, p. 730, note 6.

76. *Op. cit.*, p. 539.

77. *Commentarium in Codicem Iuris Canonici*, (Paderborn, 1950), I, 491.

78. *Op. cit.*, p. 152.

79. *Op. cit.*, p. 279.

80. *Op. cit.*, p. 108.

81. *Studies during the Novitiate in Review for Religious*, II (1943), 261.

82. *Op. cit.*, p. 302.

83. *CpR.*, *ibid.*, p. 214.

84. Art. 36, § 1, n. 2.

Among the monthly mission intentions for 1959, Pope Pius XII has listed for April: "That laymen working for the Church in the missions may receive sound spiritual, doctrinal, scientific and technical training."

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